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THE MODERN CHURCHMAN

By identifying the new learning with heresy, you make orthodoxy synonymous with ignorance.—*Erasmus.*

EDITOR: H. D. A. MAJOR, D.D., F.S.A.

The 34th Annual Conference of Modern Churchmen

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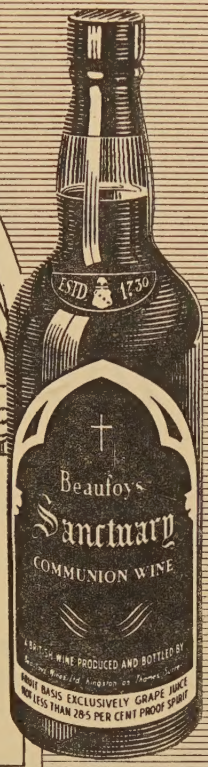

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A State without the means of change is without the means of its conservation.—*Edmund Burke.*

No. 3 SEPTEMBER Vol. XLI

THE OXFORD CONFERENCE, 1951

By The Editor

THE thirty-fourth Annual Conference of Modern Churchmen was held at Somerville College, Oxford, from August 13-17, 1951.

The theme of the Conference was 'The Church : Past, Present and Future.' Sir Henry Self delivered the Presidential Address : 'A Layman looks at the Church.' His Introduction presented interesting parallels and contrasts to the remarkable paper contributed later by Professor Marcel Simon of Strasbourg : 'The Church of England as a Continental Layman sees it.'

The titles and readers of the Conference papers were as follows :

'The Primitive Church in its Relation to Judaism' by the Rev. S. G. F. Brandon, M.A., D.D., S.C.F.

'The Church and its Ministers' by the Rev. G. W. H. Lampe, M.A., Fellow of St. John's College, Oxford.

'Jesus and the Church' by the Rev. T. J. Wood, M.A., B.D.

'Factors in the Development and Expansion of the Early Church' by the Rev. P. Gardner-Smith, B.D., Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge.

'The Teaching Office of the Church' by the Rev. Canon M. T. Dunlop, M.A., Director of Religious Education, Diocese of Manchester.

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'The Holy Spirit and the Church' by the Rev. H. C. Snape, M.A., Vicar of Whalley, Lancs.

'The Church and Christian Reunion' by the Rev. A. W. Adams, B.D., M.A., Dean of Divinity and Fellow of Magdalen College, Oxford.

The Conference Sermon (included also in this issue) was delivered in Somerville College Chapel by the Rev. E. F. Carpenter, M.A., B.D., Canon of Westminster.

'The Church: Past, Present and Future' is so vast a theme that the aspects of it selected for treatment in our Conference had of necessity to be severely restricted. This entailed the omission of such interesting themes as the Church's relation to Art and, even more important, its relation to the Foreign Missions of the Church.

The study of Church History produces very different impressions even on the minds of loyal and zealous Christians. The great Bishop Lightfoot of Durham found it to be 'a cordial for drooping spirits.' Such has been the effect of Chateaubriand's *Le Génie du Christianisme* on many of its readers. Very different indeed was the effect of the study of Church History on H. T. Buckle, the author of *The History of Civilization in England.*

Midway between Bishop Lightfoot and Buckle stands that brilliant essayist Alfred Fawkes, for many years a Roman priest and later an English vicar. In a sermon preached before the University of Cambridge in 1929 from the text

> 'Get thee behind me, Satan: thou art an offence unto me: for thou savourest not the things that be of God, but those that be of men' (*Mt.* xvi, 23)

Fawkes described the Church as a necessary evil.[1]

Perhaps the most judicious presentation of the Church given by an English scholar is enshrined in Rashdall's *Christus in Ecclesia*,[2] particularly in Sermon II, 'The Idea of the Church,' preached from the text:

> 'Verily I say unto you, whatsoever ye shall bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven' (*Mt.* xviii, 18; R.V.).

This, Rashdall asserts,

> 'must be regarded as the foundation-charter of the whole Christian Church, not as a patent of nobility for the Christian clergy';

[1] *The Church, a Necessary Evil,* published by Blackwell, Oxford, 1932

[2] Published by T. & T. Clark, Edinburgh, 1904.

t he continues :

'Everyone knows the appalling history of the abuses which have attended the exercise of this power of binding and loosing in the actual history of Christendom.'

'The essential note of the true Church, as St. Augustine has said in one of his more liberal moments, is "*fraterna caritas*" — "brotherly charity" realized in a human society; the essence of real schism lies in the want of it.

'The idea of a Church at its highest is the idea of an organized community for transforming human society into its divine ideal.'

'The true idea of the Church is that it should be the most conspicuous realization and embodiment, the most powerful witness and promoter, of that principle of brotherhood in human society' (pp. 21-30).

Outside the New Testament the most authoritative description the Christian Church is that contained in our so-called Apostles' nd Nicene Creeds, where it is described as : *One, Holy, Catholic, nd Apostolic Church*. This fourfold description of the Church xpresses a spiritual ideal, not an historical reality, as is recogized in William Temple's *dictum* :

'I believe in One, Holy, Catholic and Apostolic Church but greatly regret that it does not exist.'

et each of these adjectives has an historical significance.

'One' is derived from Jesus Himself. 'One flock, one shepherd,' not one fold — that is a mistranslation. The unity of the hurch is not secured by an external wall within which all are nclosed, but by the voluntary love and loyalty of each member of he flock to Christ, the Good Shepherd.

'Holy' goes back to St. Paul, who addressed his converts as saints'—*Hagioi*. The Church is called 'Holy Church' because s aim is holiness and each of its members is consecrated by the cceptance of that ideal. Each member of the Church is *sacer* onsecrated) but not necessarily *sanctus* (holy).

'Catholic' goes back to St. Ignatius, the martyred Bishop of ntioch in the early years of the second century. He is the first o use it in this connection, and for him the Catholic Church means he *Universal* Church in contrast to the local Church :

'Where the Bishop is, there the Church is : where Christ is, there is the Catholic Church.'

y the fourth century 'Catholic' had changed its primitive sense nd came to mean that which was believed and practised by the aditional Church in contrast to the beliefs and practices of eretics and schismatics. St. Cyril of Jerusalem, when teaching is catechumens, said :

'When you go abroad do not ask for the Church, for the heretical schismatics call their dens by that name : ask for the Catholic Church.'

Our Prayer Book definition of the Catholic Church is more comprehensive than that of St. Cyril : 'All who profess and call themselves Christians.'

'Apostolic' goes back to St. Irenaeus in the second half of the second century. He used it to defend the traditional Faith and Canonical Scriptures against Gnostic speculations and apocryphal writing. He insists that if his readers wish to know where the original Christian Faith is to be sought it will be found in the great Apostolic Sees and has been maintained and taught in those Sees ever since apostolic times.

Many years ago, when editing an English translation of Harnack's *Constitution and Law of the Church*,[3] I came across the word *pneumatophoros* ('Spirit-bearing') and thought it was a great loss that this adjective had not been included in the description of the Christian Church in our Creeds. Surely the supreme characteristic of the Christian Church is and ought to be that it enshrines and propagates the Spirit of Christ. Great bishops of the second century, like St. Polycarp, claimed to be prophets in addition to being administrators. It is the possession of this prophetic spirit which constitutes the Church's effective qualification for winning the world to the acceptance of Christian values.

St. Vincent of Lerins in the Commonitorium which contains his famous definition of the Catholic Faith, *Quod semper, ubique ab omnibus creditum est* (a definition so grievously misinterpreted by those who do not know its context), summed up his practical conclusion in another *dictum* less well known : *Non nova, sed nove* — not new dogmas, but the basic Christian Faith held and taught in the light of new knowledge and growing experience. This expresses the modernist conviction of the relation of the Christian Church to the Christian Faith.

[3] Published by Williams & Norgate (Crown Theological Library), 1910.

PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

By Sir Henry Self, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., K.B.E., B.D.

'A LAYMAN LOOKS AT THE CHURCH'

I. Introduction

THE theme for this thirty-fourth annual conference of Modern Churchmen is, 'The Church: Past, Present and Future.' During the course of the week, papers will be delivered reviewing the original growth and present status of the Christian Church, with special reference to the constituent denomination to which we belong — the Church of England. It is my duty and privilege to open the discussions and the title suggested by the Conference Committee for my address is, 'A Layman looks at the Church.' I venture to explain that the theme did not originate with me, lest it should be thought that any layman would rashly intrude and offer such a review without a specific invitation. The responsibility becomes all the more pressing when one sees from the programme that I shall be the only layman from the United Kingdom among those presenting papers to the Conference.

It is natural in this Festival Year to follow the custom and glance back to the contrasted position of 1851. It is equally natural to seek evidence to support a description such as 'the century of progress,' but he would certainly be an optimist who seemed such a title applicable to the Church of England, or to the spiritual development of the nation to which it ministers. The century has, indeed, been one of great material progress which has projected us into an epoch-making age with the prospect of the beneficial application of revolutionary discoveries — but the prospect is sadly marred by man's present inability to match his spiritual development with his scientific achievements.

For the Church of England, the contrast of 1851 with 1951 reveals a grievous decline both in status and prestige; and it is not without significance that the decline is paralleled by the deterioration in the economic position of the country. In 1851 Britain was rapidly establishing herself as 'the workshop of the world.' By her exports (both of capital and of goods), and by her overseas 'services,' she was able to draw in abundant food and raw materials from all over the world. Now she has been transformed from a creditor to a debtor country: with depleted resources she is struggling to overcome the aftermath of two world wars and to rebuild the essential export trade and world-wide services on which her economy depends.

The economic situation is itself reflected into the life and activities of the Church. It is idle to ignore the fact that effective service depends on efficient finances and organization. No part of the 'body politic' has been so adversely affected by the economic deterioration as the Church of England. The clergy as a whole are grievously underpaid; they cannot exist without endless contrivance to make ends meet, whilst suffering all the anxieties springing from what can only be described as real poverty. As a layman, I am obliged to draw public attention at the outset to the financial plight of the clergy and the serious effect it must have on the effectiveness of the Church in promoting the spiritual welfare of the nation. The decline has been progressive for a large part of the century, but its rate and effects have become disastrously acute during the past twenty years.

II. The Century of Decline

The general parallel for the Church of England with the course of national prestige is marked. Through the nineteenth century she stood as a source of inspiration for the Protestant world; her 'Spiritual Exports,' whether in workers, doctrine or practice, were eagerly sought with a return flow of goodwill and inter-communion, inspiring the Church to its justified status in world leadership. The group of Modernist pioneers, stemming from D. F. Maurice, played no small part in the achievement of forward growth by the adaptation of religious thought to the developing needs of humanity. But, with the crushing blows dealt by the two world wars to the twentieth-century hopes of 'inevitable progress,' there has emerged in England an apparent spiritual apathy, closely allied to the gloom with which so many contemplate the economic and political situations. No longer is the Church of England a 'spiritual exporter'—she is struggling to balance her domestic accounts and, at the moment, not making a great success of it. But any enterprise which turns in upon itself and becomes pre-occupied with introspection and administrative hesitancy is not likely to be a driving force in its 'home' field—still less in 'foreign' parts: this is even more the case with a religious organization such as the Church of England. To live, she must be ever growing: growth needs freshness of mind and sureness of vision: it will turn increasingly on the 'export' to other countries of the fruits of true thought and practice, deriving from that unique spiritual tradition enshrined in the Church itself.

The present position is more obviously related to the last war than to the first. The partial recovery in the early twenties was typically demonstrated by the challenges made at the Girton

conference of the M.C.U. in 1921 when fundamentalist tendencies were successfully combated. Indeed, the course of events in the succeeding years fully warranted Canon Raven in making in 1928 the following general assessment of the position, in a little book entitled *Affirmations — God in the Modern World*.

> 'There has been in fact a vast sifting of traditions in the past few years: the infallibilities which at one time seemed the indispensable safeguards of faith have gone; the doctrine of the Fall and the theories of Atonement and Salvation dependent upon it have been drastically restated; the Apostolic Succession is doomed to pass into the realm of legends which we can appreciate but not employ; eternal damnation has disappeared from every thoughtful pulpit; the alliance between Christianity and vested interests has been strained to the breaking-point; the ordination of women is well above the horizon; the age-long controversy over the Sacraments is no longer accepted as insoluble; the desire for reunion grows apace; Modernism in its English form is sweeping over Christendom.'

In making his assessment, Canon Raven was in no way going beyond the signs of the times or the general opinion: indeed, the optimism seemed to be more than justified, for example, by the Report published in 1938 of the Commission on Christian Doctrine appointed by the Archbishops of Canterbury and York in 1922 which fully recognized the legitimacy within the Anglican faith of the modernist standpoint on basic problems of doctrine. The recession in the Church's status and outlook stems more acutely from the second world war and its aftermath, as is evidenced on the doctrinal side in no more clear manner than the present tendency in high ecclesiastical quarters not merely to ignore, but even to try and reverse the wise conclusions of the Archbishops' own Commission.

Turning to the broader picture, one has obviously to take note of the general impression of an 'all-time low' in spiritual affairs which is conveyed by the book *English Life and Leisure* recently published by Mr. B. Seebohm Rowntree and his colleague in the Social Survey on which it is based, Mr. G. R. Lavers. Greatly as one respects the authors, and especially the great experience of Mr. Rowntree in social investigations, it is difficult to avoid the thought that the survey was not sufficiently wide — and, indeed, seems rather at times to have been unduly focused on sources representing the extreme types of cases — to warrant the far-reaching conclusions that the book suggests. Nevertheless, even with this qualification, note must be taken of the assessments made as typified in the field of 'Religion' by four short extracts:

> 'Most people in Britain do not believe that the *Churches* are relevant to life in a scientific age because they observe that the Churches are in a double strait-jacket of clerical domination and rigid dogma' (p. 366).

'. . . as so many people still accept the ministrations of the Church in the baptism of their children, in marriage, and in funerals, and as Christianity, in the sense of behaviour rather than belief, still provides the standards of right and wrong, we conclude that people to-day still believe that Christianity is a relevant and vital force, although they no longer accept the idea that the Church is the "Chosen instrument for the expression of that force".' (p. 367).

'The situation was put clearly to us by one of the wise men whom we consulted . . . He said, "As far as my experience goes, I believe young people to-day have a deep desire, that I can only call a craving, for religion and for faith, but they are bored by the institutional religion offered by the Churches. Young people are just as potentially spiritual as they ever were, but religious leaders are failing utterly to capture their imagination and to satisfy the yearnings".' (p. 372).

'Though the Protestant Churches . . . will no doubt continue to exist as a symbol of the enduring nature of the Christian religion, it is inconceivable to us that they will ever again be a dominant force in the religious life of the nation . . .' (p. 373).

Recalling the wonder and grandeur of the Church in its historical development, in its presentation of national feeling at times of crisis and special importance, and in its continued ministrations to the spiritual development of those who still live within its inspiration, can we possibly accept such conclusions as these? Are we to believe that the spiritual life of the nation is, indeed, exposed to such chaotic and devastating developments? The answer is overwhelmingly in the negative. We may be very much in the trough of the wave of history, but the future lies ahead for those who will take it; and to take it means first a correct diagnosis of our present ailment. The symptom that is most acutely manifested to-day is the pathological groping on all sides for some basis of authority and certainty.

III. The Search for Authority

Canon Cobham in a broadcast talk published in the *Listener* dated March 29th last gave a penetrating analysis of the current tendencies in the Church of England, which fully recognized — even though not with any apparent relish — the part which has been, and is being, played by the Modernist movement. Looked at from another standpoint, the analysis certainly demonstrates this groping for some sure basis of authority.

The Evangelicals, seemingly in despair of maintaining the authority of the 'inerrant scriptures,' are depicted as engaging in a new 'higher criticism' designed to re-establish the comprehensive authority of the Bible, so seriously challenged by critical research. The Tractarians retreat more and more upon the authority of the Church, the Creeds and the Sacraments as the ultimate guarantees amid the shifting sands of speculation and

uncertainty of doctrine. The Liberals and Modernists are charged with demanding a freedom of conscience which, as demonstrated by the Girton conference of 1921, only resulted in undermining the authority given by reference to the historic basis of Christianity. In the upshot, one can only conclude that the Roman Catholics alone can hope to win out because they can retreat on the doctrine of the Infallible Church, surrendering if necessary any disputed claims for the status of the scriptures or the historic basis of Christianity.

The analysis might have added a fourth class reflecting the search for authority in particular interpretations of the Historic Jesus, as demonstrated, for example, by (*a*) the eschatological interpretation developed by Schweitzer, or (*b*) the tendencies in this country to-day towards a neo-orthodoxy with an emphasis on the 'Second Coming,' referred to by Canon Cobham.

The truth is that the search for authority is psychologically diseased, and must in any case concentrate on particular aspects, to the extent that they become both abstract and *pro tanto* false. There can be no special and undue emphasis either on the appeal to the historic facts, or on the Church as the spiritual Society, or on the Faith as expressed in Doctrine, or on the sacred literature. Each is one vehicle of the Truth — each manifests in its own uniqueness the Divine Essence which is seeking revelation in 'forth-shining' (to use a telling phrase of the outmoded Hegel). 'God maketh His Face to shine,' as the Hebrews taught. His Revelation seeks everywhere and at all times the joy of immediacy: and on occasion it is blinding in its potency. Such are the occasions of the historic Incarnation, the growth of the Church, the dawning expression of Doctrine, and the spiritual treasure of the Bible — but all must be kept in perspective, within the full functioning of the Spirit energizing and revealing to-day and here — as at all times and in all places.

IV. Revelation — a Continuing Process

In such a perspective, the ultimate authority for the Church, as for the individual, must be Faith in the Divine Revelation as a continuing process reaching from the past through the present and into the future. The psychopathic tendencies present in the Church to-day are manifest in the desire of so many to retreat into, and to live in, the past — seeking authoritarianism in outmoded symbols, practices and ideas, hoary with age and the distortions of bygone custom: this, one might reasonably assert, is one of the outstanding causes of the present indifference of youth to institutional religion. They rightly expect the custodians of

spiritual tradition to re-present it in modern dress and language — to lay claim to its status as a solution of the pressing problems of the times — and, having so measured up to the present, to advance boldly with the challenge of Faith into the Future.

In Dr. Brandon's review of Dr. Emil Brunner's Gifford lectures in the *Modern Churchman* for June, 1951, he says:

> 'Later, in discussing the effects of Liberalism and noting that modern man is increasingly averse from exercising the privilege of personal responsibility and tends to find refuge therefrom in the Roman Catholic Church or the Communist State, he (Dr. Brunner) adds a comment which must provoke many to earnest thought—Protestantism, "having identified itself wrongly with individualism, is no longer regarded as a spiritual power providing social cohesion and direction".'

Whatever may be the truth about the dangers of *extreme* individualism, the fact remains that the genius of the Anglican Church reflects the national characteristic of individual responsibility within a corporate body. Each man is the 'Adam of his own soul,' and there can be no future for the Church of England as such if it pursues the path of authoritarianism.

In the same number of the *Modern Churchman*, Mr. J. C. Hardwick draws attention to the significance of Lord Samuel's recent book, *Creative Man*, and suggests that

> 'Lord Samuel places his finger upon the two great weaknesses of institutional religion—our archaic and technical theology, which speaks in terms of philosophies and beliefs which have long ceased to live; and our clericalism—preserved in our immutable, irreformable ecclesiastical institutions.'

But neither of these two obstacles should persist, if the Church will recognize and give freedom to the continuing process of Revelation reshaping institutions, re-expressing doctrine, revealing new facets of belief, inspiring response and meeting it with ever-widening disclosures of the spiritual background of life. Development is the principle of Revelation, as of all other fields of enterprise.

In short, the practical rules of spiritual health for the Church seem to prescribe a transfer of interest from the past to the future. This can only be the regime of recovery, if Reason is accepted as one of the aids to true understanding of Revelation, itself a continuing manifestation of spiritual values whether as Truth, Beauty or Goodness.

Equally, this must be the path if there is to be the all-essential reciprocity of respect between Science, Art, Philosophy and Religion as separate but sister forms of human spiritual endeavour. On all sides there is growing recognition that the philosophy of science, the philosophy of art, and the philosophy of religion are

but separate facets of one spiritual culture — each essential in its own way to the common weal but yet subject to its own progressive adjustment to the contributions of the others. Why does the philosophy of religion alone turn away from the concordat and seek its justification — or rather isolated deterioration — in an outlived past?

V. The Heritage and the Future

If one were asked to suggest a motto for a national Church, it would be hard to resist the words of the ancient prophet, '*Where there is no vision, the people perish.*' Vision relates to the future: it is inspired by the past and attendant to the present, but all its emphasis is on the path ahead.

That is the crying need from our spiritual leaders to-day. The Church enshrines the great tradition of Faith as it has sustained a unique people through many centuries: it expresses supremely all the national aspirations and pent-up feelings with unfailing certainty of touch at all times of crisis: given the prophetic vision, what could it not achieve in the battle for the Future — firstly for this people, and then through them, for the world?

To get this vision, surely it must have regard to all sources of inspiration, including art, philosophy and science, as well as religious experience? The last is obviously the all-important medium of interpretation, and the possible contributions of the others are great. Taking philosophy as an example, and to quote Mr. Hardwick's review again:

> 'philosophy can help us, but it is religion which can bring in emotion, intuition, untrammelled speculation, and take the leap of faith. In these rarer regions of feeling and thought, the abstract may be supplemented by the human, and the impersonal of philosophy becomes the personal of religion.'

Dr. Major, in his editorial to the same *Modern Churchman*, comments on the *rapprochement* between Science and Religion. He refers to Professor A. C. Hardy's recent lecture, *Science and the Quest for God*, and observes that Dr. Hardy,

> 'conscious of the tyranny exercised by tradition in the sphere of religion, stresses the immense importance of the study of modern religious experience: I (Dr. Hardy) cannot help feeling it is likely to be more important for religion in the future to have a theology that is founded on the reality of religious experience, than to have one that builds its doctrines upon supposed events in the past'!

In terms of Christian Modernism, the emphasis would be on the need to re-live the faith in religious experience to-day and thereby so re-express it as to enable it to become the living inspiration of the generation that will follow.

Dr. Major also reviews the remarkable autobiography of Professor Max Planck, the founder of the quantum theory of modern physics, and concludes:

> 'The last words of Planck's volume deserve their place beside those of the Puritan Pilgrims: "Religion and natural science are fighting a joint battle in an incessant, never relaxing crusade against scepticism and against dogmatism, against disbelief and against superstition, and the rallying cry in this crusade has always been and always will be, 'On to God'!".'

Will the Church take the lead in that crusade? It is an encouraging sign that Canon Raven, a Vice-President of this Union, has been delivering so effective a series of B.B.C. talks these recent weeks on this very theme. If the B.B.C. welcome such talks, the signs are certainly propitious.

THE PRIMITIVE CHURCH IN ITS RELATION TO JUDAISM

By the Rev. S. G. F. Brandon, M.A., D.D., C.F.

I

IN two separate places in Paul's writings there occurs a truly amazing statement; yet almost as amazingly its tremendous significance seems to have been missed by most New Testament scholars. It occurs first, if we may accept its priority, in the *Epistle to the Galatians* (i, 6-9). Here we find Paul writing:

> 'I marvel that ye are so quickly removing from him that called you in the grace of Christ unto a different gospel (εἰς ἕτερον εὐαγγέλιον); which is not another gospel (ὃ οὐκ ἔστιν ἄλλο): only there are some that would trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, should preach unto you any gospel other than that which we preached unto you, let him be anathema.'

Then in the *Second Epistle to the Corinthians* (xi, 3-4) comes the warning and rebuke to his converts:

> 'But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus (ἄλλον Ἰησοῦν), whom we did not preach, or if ye receive a different spirit (πνεῦμα ἕτερον) from that which ye did receive, or a different gospel (εὐαγγέλιον ἕτερον) from that which ye did accept, you welcome it.'

Now let us try to appreciate properly the truly amazing situation to which these two passages bear witness. The expression '*a different gospel*,' used in each passage, together with that of

preaching '*another Jesus*,' can surely only mean a rival interpretation of Christianity;[1] in other words, that St. Paul recognizes that there was being propagated in Galatia and at Corinth a version or interpretation of Christianity which was different from his own. The difference, moreover, was not merely academic, but clearly concerned fundamental issues—indeed, issues which were so basic that the protagonist of this other gospel is pronounced anathema.

We may thus at once draw our first conclusion : it is that within some twenty years of the Crucifixion two fundamentally opposed interpretations of the Christian faith were already in circulation. It will undoubtedly be granted that this is a matter of considerable importance; but, to assess correctly the degree of that importance, it is obviously necessary to identify those who were the exponents of this other gospel over which Paul shows so much concern. Were they merely an obscure band of heretics, perhaps too Judaistic or too Hellenistic in their emphasis, or were they persons of far greater authority and prestige in the infant Church?

Before answering this question directly we must notice a matter, the proper appreciation of which will decisively condition that answer. It is that of the place which Paul's writings occupy in the New Testament canon. In sheer bulk alone, as the product of one writer, they so dominate the collection that the impression naturally arises that Paul was the exponent *par excellence* of the faith in the Primitive Church. This impression, however, cannot be sustained when the situation revealed in those writings is fairly considered without *a priori* judgments about Paul's status in the first decades of the Christian movement. For in the letters which he addressed to the various communities of his converts there is evidence of bitter controversy, of great emotional tension, and, on Paul's part, an obvious feeling of insecurity. Further, despite the vigour with which Paul counter-attacks his opponents, there is no hint that he felt that he was winning and even less that he felt that victory was assured to him because his authority was unquestioned and his teaching representative of the accepted doctrine.

Then there is the curious witness of the *Corpus Paulinum* itself to be considered. For, while it is indeed true that Paul's writings bulk so large in the New Testament *corpus*, on closer

[1] On the comparative meanings of ἄλλος and ἕτερος it would seem that little can be usefully added to the comment of J. B. Lightfoot, *The Epistle to the Galatians* (London, 1881), p. 76 : 'Thus while ἄλλος is generally confined to a negative of identity, ἕτερος sometimes implies the negation of resemblance.' Cf. Kirsopp Lake, *The Earlier Epistles of St. Paul* (London, 1930), p. 267, note 1.

examination those writings present certain peculiar features. Thus, as every New Testament student knows, the sixteenth chapter of *Romans*, the *Second Epistle to the Corinthians*, the once existent *Epistle to the Laodicaeans*[2] and the *Pastoral Epistles* all point to the fact that very early in their career Paul's writings must have been subjected to damage and loss. From this fact it surely follows in turn that a period must have elapsed when Paul's letters were not treasured as the revered legacy of a great saint and teacher; a period, moreover, which was terminated by a definitive search after them — a search which in some instances was made too late, since either the document concerned was lost or irreparably damaged. Now such a sequence of fortune in the matter of his letters must surely indicate a similar sequence in the history of Paul's reputation—in other words, we must conclude that Paul was not always regarded as the great exponent of the Christian faith and that there was very early a period in which his reputation suffered eclipse and his writings were neglected.[3]

In the light of these conclusions we are now better able to answer our earlier question about the identity of Paul's opponents, the protagonists of the rival gospel. Accordingly, we must see them as men who could not only expound a rival interpretation of Christianity, but could do so with such success in Paul's own mission-field that in all his fierce counter-attacks Paul gives no sign that he felt that he was winning and that his cause was safe from such a challenge. Then there is the evidence that the position which his writings have come to possess in the canon of the New Testament was only achieved after a period of neglect, a fact which naturally suggests that there was a time prior to the formation of the *Corpus Paulinum* when Paul was not regarded as a revered exponent of the faith. When these facts, therefore, are considered together with certain others, namely, Paul's obvious consciousness in the *Galatian* and the *Second Corinthian Epistles* of the inferiority of his authority *vis-à-vis* the leaders of the Jerusalem Church[4] and the evidence of *Acts* that he was a

[2] *Col.* iv, 16. Cf. J. Moffatt, *Introduction to the Literature of the New Testament* (Edinburgh, 1933), pp. 159, 161.

[3] It may be noted here that in the so-called Pseudo-Clementine literature Paul is actually described as 'that enemy' and is identified with the original heresiarch Simon Magus. This Pseudo-Clementine literature appears to have emanated from some Jewish Christian sects living in Transjordania during the second century, and it probably preserves traditions deriving from the original Mother Church of Jerusalem. See H. J. Schoeps, *Geschichte und Theologie des Judenchristentums* (Tübingen, 1949), pp. 128 sq., 257, 420, 425-6 (see also note 19 below); O. Cullmann, *Le Problème littéraire et historique du Roman Pseudo-Clémentin* (Paris, 1930), pp. 94-9.

[4] *Gal.* i, 15-19; ii, 1 sq.; II *Cor.* xi, 5, 20-3; cf. I *Cor.* ix, 5.

comparatively late-comer to the faith,[5] and that finally he felt himself obliged to submit to the test of Jewish orthodoxy imposed upon him by the Jerusalem Christians,[6] the identity of the exponents of the rival gospel becomes clear. They were none other than the leaders of the Mother Church of Jerusalem, over whom presided James, the Lord's brother.[7]

Again, we must pause to apprehend fully the profound significance of this situation. It means nothing less than that within some two decades of the Crucifixion two essentially different interpretations of the faith were current in the Church, the one being that set forth by the original community of believers at Jerusalem and the other advanced by Paul, a comparatively late convert whose authority as an exponent of the faith was clearly rejected by the Jerusalem leaders. And then, truly a paradox, it is the writings of Paul and not of the Jerusalem Christians which are preserved in the New Testament canon, but preserved in such a form that we have to believe that there was very early a period when Paul's reputation in the Church was at very low ebb.

II

The situation being evidently such, we are naturally brought to ask what was the interpretation of the faith expounded by the original community of believers — an interpretation, let us remember, which must have all the prestige of being the original form of the Christian faith as set forth by those who had been the actual disciples of Jesus of Nazareth and eye-witnesses of His life and the first recipients of His teaching.

In seeking to answer this question we are at once confronted with a fact which does itself constitute an important factor in the problem of Christian Origins. It is that there survives no document setting forth the teaching of the Mother Church of Jerusalem.[8] This means, of course, that we can have no direct and

[5] *Acts* viii, 1 sq.; xxii, 3 sq.

[6] *Acts* xxi, 20-6.

[7] For a more complete discussion of the problem of the identity of Paul's opponents see the present writer's work, *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church* (S.P.C.K., London, 1951), pp. 130-45.

[8] It would seem that the general consensus of recent expert opinion is against regarding the *Epistle of James* in its present form as a document of the Jerusalem Church prior to A.D. 70. Cf. Schoeps, *op. cit.*, pp. 343 sq.; H. Windisch, *Die katholischen Briefe* (Tübingen, 1930), pp. 21, 36; Moffatt, *op. cit.*, pp. 468-75; Ch. Guignebert, *Le Christ* (Paris, 1943), pp. 42-3; W. L. Knox in *The Journal of Theological Studies*, Vol. XLVI (1945), pp. 10-17. See also the present writer's above-mentioned work, pp. 237-9, for the *Epistle's* place in the development of Alexandrian Christianity.

certain access to the original version of the faith — a fact which in itself must surely cause us to wonder and become extremely cautious in making our estimate of the beginnings of Christianity. However, we are not entirely without resource in seeking to know the teaching of the Jerusalem Church, for a careful consideration of some of Paul's relevant statements clearly indicates the main features of that teaching, and there is other evidence which strikingly confirms these indications.

In Paul's writings there are two passages which surely afford clues to the nature of that 'other gospel' which his opponents were expounding among his own converts. The first is that passage in II *Corinthians*, chapter five, which has caused so much conflict of opinion among commentators.[9] Herein Paul is intent on rebutting the teaching of those whom he curiously describes as persons 'who glory in appearance (ἐν προσώπῳ), and not in heart (ἐν καρδίᾳ).' The contrast here is evidently between those who boast of some kind of superiority based on some form of external physical criteria and those who rest their claim on criteria of an internal and spiritual nature. The real character of the issue soon becomes clear in the following verses:

> 'For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that one died for all, therefore all died; and he died for all, that they which live should no longer live unto themselves, but unto him who for their sakes died and rose again. Wherefore we henceforth know no man after the flesh (κατὰ σάρκα): even though we have known Christ after the flesh (κατὰ σάρκα), yet now we know him so no more. Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new.'

Accordingly we see that a distinction is drawn by Paul between knowledge of Christ κατὰ σάρκα and knowledge of Christ in some other contrasted form. Now there can be little doubt that the expression 'Christ κατὰ σάρκα' means Christ as an historical personage[10]— the 'Jesus of history' in modern parlance. And in turn it must follow that the conception of Christ preferred by Paul must be one which envisaged Him essentially in a non-historical form, which can only mean as a spiritual being, spiritually apprehended.

We arrive, then, at this point: Paul's opponents are the exponents of teaching which sets an essential premium on knowledge

[9] H. Windisch, *Der zweite Korinthbrief* (Göttingen, 1924), pp. 186-8, describes six different interpretations which various scholars have offered of the crucial verse 16.

[10] See Paul's use of κατὰ σάρκα, e.g. in *Rom.* i, 3; iv, 1; viii, 4, 5; ix, 3, 5; I *Cor.* x, 18; *Gal.* iv, 23, 29.

of the historical Jesus; in other words, the interpretation of the faith propagated by the Church of Jerusalem was characterized by the importance which was laid upon actual first-hand experience of Jesus of Nazareth — a conclusion, indeed, which is fully consistent with the fact that that Church must have contained many who had actually been the disciples of Jesus during His lifetime or eye-witnesses of His career.

This conclusion in itself, however, has no extraordinary significance; but, when it is considered in the light of another fact which is to be gleaned from certain of Paul's remarks, we perceive that a situation existed in the Church about A.D. 50 of most profound import both for our understanding of Christian Origins and for our appreciation of the validity of subsequent developments of Christian doctrine.

In order to see this we must first refer back to a statement in the passage from II *Corinthians* which we have just been discussing. Here we find Paul stating what he evidently held to be an important feature of his teaching in contrast to that of his opponents. The pertinent words are 'we thus judge that one died for all.' Now this can fairly mean none other than that Paul's teaching differed from that of the Jerusalem Church in finding a soteriological significance in the death of Jesus. And this conclusion aptly explains what has always been regarded as a passage of obscure meaning in the Galatian Epistle and in turn is illuminated by it. Paul writes towards the end of this letter (vi, 12):

> 'As many as desire to make fair show in the flesh, they compel you to be circumcised; only that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.'

In other words, not only does Paul imply that the Jerusalem Christians did not interpret the Crucifixion soteriologically, but that they pursued a policy calculated to save them from suffering on behalf of such a doctrine.[11]

Now these inferences which we have drawn from Paul's writings can be shown to be remarkably consistent with a number of others drawn from different sources which we can only briefly enumerate here. First, there is the key-fact that the Jews at this period did not expect a Messiah who would bring salvation to Israel by his own vicarious death, and still less did they believe that their Messiah would sacrifice himself to save all mankind.[12]

[11] Cf. Brandon, *op. cit.*, pp. 70-1, 78.

[12] Cf. G. F. Moore, *Judaism* (Cambridge, Mass., 1927), Vol. I, pp. 275-80; J. Klausner, *From Jesus to Paul* (E.T., London, 1942), pp. 139-40; Ch. Guignebert, *Le Monde juif vers le Temps de Jésus* (Paris, 1935), pp. 191-8; J. J. Brierre-Narbonne, *Le Messie Souffrant dans la Littérature rabbinique*

Next, there is the evidence in the Markan Gospel that prior to its composition a Passion Narrative had already been developed into a well-articulated whole.[13] That this should have been so is at once apparent when it is realized that one of the chief objections which the first disciples had to encounter from their fellow Jews, when they proclaimed Jesus as the Messiah, was the fact that He had died the accursed death of the Law.[14] Hence in their apologetic they had to try to show that, according to Moses and all the prophets, it behoved 'the Christ to suffer these things, and to enter into his glory.'[15] To this end, as the story of the Ethiopian eunuch in *Acts* shows,[16] the concept of the Suffering Servant of Isaiah was especially pertinent. However, the need of the Jewish Christians in this matter was defensive: their concern was to show that their Master could be the Messiah, despite His execution; but they had no interest in explaining why He should have died thus — as Jews they did not look for a Messiah who had to die to vindicate Israel before the nations of the world, and that the death of Jesus at the hands of their hated Roman rulers should have been divinely ordained to win eternal salvation for individual Gentiles would have been quite beyond their comprehension, and certainly for them an outrageous suggestion when they heard of Paul's interpretation to this effect.[17] For the further confirmation of these conclusions we may note, too, that the Jerusalem Christians, according to the evidence of *Acts*, continued faithfully in the worship of the Temple and the practice of Judaic rites and customs, and that they succeeded in attracting many priests and Pharisees into their ranks, that they could be described as 'zealous for the Law,' and that they finally required Paul to prove his loyalty to Judaism and to disprove the charges made against him that his teaching undermined the validity of the peculiar spiritual status of the Jews.[18]

To the witness of this New Testament evidence there must now be added that which Professor H. J. Schoeps has recently set forth in his important work on the history and theology of Jewish

(Paris, 1940), pp. 1-2. It remains to be seen whether Professor A. Dupont-Sommer's interpretation of the recently discovered *Commentary on Habbakuk*, and his theory that the members of the 'New Alliance' believed in a Suffering Messiah, succeeds in establishing itself; see his monographs, *Observations sur le Commentaire d'Habacuc découvert près de la Mer Morte* (Paris, 1950), pp. 14-15, 22, 25, and *Aperçus préliminaires sur les Manuscrits de la Mer Morte* (Paris, 1950), pp. 45, 46, 56, 78.

[13] Cf. V. Taylor, *The Formation of the Gospel Tradition* (London, 1945), pp. 49 sq.

[14] Cf. *Gal.* iii, 13. [15] *Luke* xxiv, 25-6. [16] *Acts* viii, 26-38.

[17] Cf. Brandon, *op. cit.*, pp. 76-7, 78, 80 note 7.

[18] *Acts* ii, 46; iii, 1; v, 42; vi, 7; x, 9-16; xv, 1, 5; xxi, 20-6.

Christianity.[19] By a careful examination of the relevant Ebionite[20] documents this scholar has been able to show that the original Jewish Christians were consciously opposed to any deification of Jesus, and that they elaborated a definite polemic against Paul's soteriological interpretation of the Crucifixion; to them Jesus was essentially the *novus Moses*, who would return again as the Messiah of prophetic promise.

III

From this brief and rapid survey of some very complicated data we shall do well to pause now and sum up our findings. We see that the Christian movement before A.D. 70 was no peaceful and harmonious process of development whereby the original teaching of the Master was interpreted in the light of His Crucifixion and Resurrection under the inspired leadership of His first apostles. There was, indeed, a traditional teaching which had behind it the supreme authority of the original apostles and the Lord's brother, James. But it was a doctrine which cannot possibly be identified as the definitive prototype of what became Catholic Gentile Christianity, for in the matter of the two essentials of that faith, namely, the divinity of Jesus and his soteriological rôle, the teaching of the Jerusalem Church was not merely undeveloped, but consciously hostile.

Against the original and orthodox tradition of the Mother Church of Jerusalem we have found Paul, a late-comer to Christianity, propounding a rival interpretation of the faith which contained such radical differences that Paul himself sees the issue as one between different gospels, and even between different beings each denominated 'Jesus.' Into the origins of Paul's interpretation we cannot here enter — as is well known, the subject has been, and still is, a storm-centre of opinion in New Testament

[19] *Geschichte und Theologie des Judenchristentums* (Tübingen, 1949). See also the present writer's review of Professor Schoeps' work in an article entitled 'Recent Interpretations of Christian Origins' in *The Modern Churchman*, Vol. XLI (1951), pp. 29-32.

[20] The Jewish Christian communities of Palestine, which claimed to be the descendants of the original Church of Jerusalem, appear to have called themselves 'Ebionites' (Ἐβιωναῖοι) shortly before or after A.D. 70; Irenaeus is the first Catholic Christian known to have used the name in a derogatory sense as describing a heretical sect. The origin of the name is uncertain; it seems to have been the Hebrew equivalent of πτωχοί, *i.e.* 'the poor,' and to have referred to those who made poverty an ideal (see *Rom.* xv, 26; *Gal.* ii, 10; *Matt.* v, 3; xi, 5; cf. *Is.* lvii, 15; *Acts* iv, 32-5). During the second century the word appears to have acquired an opprobrious meaning, probably at first among the Jews from whom it was learned by the Catholic Christians. Cf. Schoeps, *op. cit.*, pp. 350-1.

studies. However, this at least can be safely said, that, in setting forth Jesus as a pre-existent divine being who had redeemed mankind by his own vicarious death, Paul ran essentially counter to the teaching of the Jewish Christians of the Mother Church of Jerusalem.

Having thus described in brief the proportions of the cleavage of interpretation which manifested itself in the first two decades of the life of the Church, we come now to the paradox of the situation. The terms thereof are briefly these: the teaching of the Jerusalem Christians was clearly the traditional orthodoxy, while Paul's gospel was an innovation — an innovation made by one who was not an original disciple and eye-witness, by one who had once sought to suppress the faith by persecuting its members. Could the portrait of an heretic be better limned! And yet here lies the paradox: it has been the doctrine of the innovator Paul which has prevailed, it has been his writings which dominate the *corpus* of the Church's sacred literature, while, not only have the writings of the Mother Church of Christianity vanished, but its teaching has become stigmatized as Ebionite heresy.[21]

The elucidation of this apparent paradox is among the most important problems of New Testament research, and the present writer has set forth at length elsewhere his own contribution to that task.[22] Here it must suffice briefly to cite one of the conclusions which he has reached thereon. It is that, next to the Resurrection experiences of the first disciples, he believes that the most crucial event in the evolution of Christianity was the Jewish war against Rome, which commenced in the year A.D. 66 and ended with the destruction of Jerusalem and the virtual obliteration of Israel as a nation four years later in A.D. 70.

This catastrophic overthrow of Jewish national life completely changed the disposition of authority in the nascent Christian Church and transformed its policy and outlook. So far as the preceding situation can be reconstructed, it appears that Paul, realizing that he was losing in the struggle with the Jerusalem Christians, decided to stake all upon a visit to Jerusalem in the hope that there he might negotiate some *modus vivendi*.[23] The account of this visit is recorded in *Acts* xx-xxi and alluded to in Paul's own writings. The outcome was failure: not only did the astute James oblige Paul to give public proof of his Jewish orthodoxy, but Paul's own arrest by the Romans removed him

[21] Cf. Schoeps, *op. cit.*, p. 270.

[22] In his book entitled *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church*; see especially chapters 1 and 4-11.

[23] Cf. Brandon, *op. cit.*, pp. 149-53.

effectively from further direct contact with his converts. The consequences of this misfortune were dire for the future of the Pauline interpretation of the faith — just how dire were they finds eloquent expression in the farewell charge to the Ephesian elders which Luke, who must have known the sequel, places in Paul's mouth :

> 'I know that after my departing grievous wolves shall enter in among you, not sparing the flock; and from among your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after them.' [24]

Thus, from the moment of his arrest, Paul's converts were laid open to the unopposed propaganda of the emissaries of the Jerusalem Church. Even when their apostle was at hand to intervene, many of those converts had shown themselves susceptible to the claims of the Jerusalem gospel; without Paul their reaction may be easily assumed. Accordingly, from the time of his arrest in the year A.D. 55,[25] we may reasonably suppose that Paul's reputation and influence suffered eclipse in his own mission-field, while the traditional orthodoxy of Jerusalem was presented unchallenged.

What would have been the ultimate fate of Paul's work, if this situation had continued, we can only speculate; but at least it would seem that his writings would never have entered the accepted canon of scripture in such a way that he, their author, appears thereby to be the supreme exponent of Apostolic Christianity. However that may be, the situation was dramatically reversed by the events of A.D. 66-70 in Palestine; for in the signal overthrow then of the Jewish people the Church of Jerusalem, the original source of Christianity and the depository of its essential traditions, completely disappeared, nevermore to return to its place of supreme authority and control.

It was of the aftermath of the Jewish overthrow of A.D. 70 that what was to be Catholic Christianity was born. The process of gestation was a complicated one and many factors were involved. However, the new synthesis found expression in all its essential parts in the Markan Gospel. This work is basically an *apologia* designed to meet the situation with which a Gentile Christian community found itself faced after the destruction of Jerusalem and the obliteration of the Mother Church. The predominance of the Jerusalem gospel had not been sufficient to erase the memory of that of Paul; nevertheless, the emphasis on the historical Jesus had an unforgettable appeal, so that it had to be reconciled with the reviving reputation of Paul and his teaching. But that was not

[24] *Acts* xx, 29-30.

[25] Cf. *The Beginnings of Christianity* (London, 1933), Vol. V, pp. 470-3.

all: for the violence of the Jewish revolt had created a general odium for all things Jewish, so that it became necessary for Gentile Christians to show that, although their faith had indeed originated in Judaea, in its essentials it was quite separate from Judaism. To this end the author of *Mark* developed his theme that Jesus, though born a Jew, had been repudiated by, and in turn had repudiated, the leaders of His people and indeed His people also, His family and even His disciples, and that finally, and this is the climax of the Gospel, it was a Gentile, in the person of the Roman centurion, who was the first human being to see in the dying Jesus on the cross the Son of God.[26]

And so in the Markan Gospel the pregnant synthesis was first achieved between the historical Jesus, the Messiah of the primitive orthodoxy of the Jewish *Urgemeinde*, and the pre-existent divine saviour of Paul. And upon that fundamental theme of *Mark* all subsequent interpretations of the status and rôle of Jesus are but variations.

Just briefly to complete our solution here to the paradox with which we have been occupied, we may note that, while the destruction of Jerusalem doubtlessly involved the destruction of the archives of the Christian community there, a series of documents in the New Testament canon marks the gradual rehabilitation of Paul. The *Gospel of Mark*, as we have seen, constitutes the first stage in this process; the *Acts of the Apostles* represents another and later phase, as does the formation of the *Corpus Paulinum*; then there is the converse witness of the Matthean Gospel and the *Epistle of James*, attesting, in the belief of the present writer, the adverse reaction of the Jewish Christians of Alexandria to this resurgence of Paulinism.[27]

IV

We see, then, that prior to A.D. 70, and indeed within the second decade at least of its existence, a profound divergence of interpretation had already appeared within the Church. Moreover, it was a divergence of interpretation concerning not merely peripheral matters such as the validity of Jewish cultic practices, for the very essentials of the faith were involved — or rather, perhaps, what were to be the essentials of the faith.

[26] The absence of the definite article here (*Mk.* xv, 39) does not lessen the testimony of this passage. The interpretation of the Markan Gospel, briefly outlined here, is set forth at length by the present writer in *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church*, chapter x, 'The Markan Reaction to A.D. 70.' See also his *Time and Mankind* (Hutchinson, 1951), pp. 159-66.

[27] See *The Fall of Jerusalem and the Christian Church*, chapters x-xii.

That Christianity originally sprang out of the impact which the personality of Jesus of Nazareth had upon certain of His first followers is at least certain. But that experience had to be interpreted in terms of the categories which the mental capacity and education of the recipients allowed. A definitive interpretation was soon formulated, possibly under the dominating influence in the *Urgemeinde* of such leaders as James, the Lord's brother, and set forth as the authentic tradition of the men who had followed the Lord Jesus all the time that He 'went in and went out . . . beginning from the baptism of John, unto the day that He was received up . . .'[28] The essentially Jewish terms of this interpretation of the status and mission of Jesus we have noticed: that it was the original version of the faith and was founded upon the belief of the eye-witnesses and first disciples must be admitted; but we must surely wonder in so doing what would have been the future of this faith, if it had thus continued in its primary form.

That Paul's interpretation was equally based upon a personal experience of Jesus must also surely be granted; but it was not that of the historical Jesus of Nazareth — it was that of the Risen Lord, against the idea of whom Paul had at first so violently striven; for it was the scandal of the Cross, in which he later gloried, that at the beginning was the supreme offence of the new faith.[29] Hence Paul in his turn had to interpret his experience to himself within the categories of his apprehension; and the result we, too, have seen in his gospel of Jesus as the divine Saviour of all mankind.

If the exposition of this initial stage of the life of the Church, which we have attempted here, be soundly based, what are the conclusions which we can legitimately draw therefrom, to enlighten our understanding of the nature and relevance of Christianity in our time?

They are several and may be briefly described. The first, and in a very true sense the supreme determining factor in all our evaluations of Christian Origins: as we seek back to the beginnings of Christianity, the process is essentially one of discovering the most primitive interpretation which was held of Jesus and His work — for by such means alone can we hope to know the historical Jesus.[30] Secondly, the traditional interpretation of the Jerusalem Mother Church was soon challenged by an interpretation which based itself essentially upon mystical experience and

[28] *Acts* i, 21-2.

[29] Cf. I *Cor.* i, 23; *Gal.* vi, 14.

[30] Cf. 'The Logic of New Testament Criticism,' an article in *The Hibbert Journal,* Vol. XLVII (1948-9).

sanctioned a concept of Jesus which fundamentally denied the beliefs of those who remained loyal to the essential tenets of Judaism, as did the original disciples. Thirdly, we must note that, from all we know of the gospel of the Jerusalem Church, it must be recognized that this original orthodoxy, if it had continued to predominate, must inevitably have resulted in the atrophy of the Christian movement. And, lastly, we must take account of the fact that Christianity was saved from atrophy and became a universal religion by the intervention of a series of events on the secular plane, namely, the revolt of the Jewish people against their Roman overlord and their disastrous defeat. It is this happening, so apparently unconnected with the expected sequence of the Christian movement, that rescued the gospel of Paul from oblivion and insured that, synthesized with the tradition of the historical Jesus, it should become the basis of Gentile Christianity.

The logic of these conclusions is surely obvious. As a matter of historical fact we have to recognize that there was never a single unchallenged orthodox form of the Christian faith, except perhaps for the short period before Paul began to preach his gospel. Moreover, the original version of the faith could never have become a universal religion; at the most it did but contribute — vitally, it is true — to the Markan synthesis which was to set the pattern of Catholic Christianity. But in this complex of causes and effects, some consistent and some fortuitous, one fact does stand out crystal clear. It is that, despite the differences of outlook, temperament and culture of those who played a formative part in these first decades of Christian history, for all there was ultimately one only source of inspiration and sanction, namely, the conviction that He who had been Jesus of Nazareth was still alive and mighty to save.

THE EARLY CHURCH AND THE MINISTRY

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A PAPER on the early history of the Christian Ministry cannot make much more than an inconclusive contribution to the discussions of a conference such as this. The cause lies in the subject itself. In our modern situation we are faced with the immensely difficult problems of order and authority which have been bequeathed to us by past controversies and by the whole course of the development of ecclesiastical history and the doctrines which have emerged during that historical process. We have reached a point at which all attempts at the reunion of the Churches in this country appear likely to be frustrated by our inability to agree upon the doctrine of the Ministry. Even where, as the conversations leading to the recent Report on 'Church Relations in England' showed so clearly, agreement is acknowledged to have been established on the fundamental doctrines of the Faith, the problems of order still present the gravest obstacles to the attainment even of inter-communion, not to speak of full corporate unity. In this situation we naturally tend to read the New Testament and the writings of the early Church to discover principles which can be directly applied to our contemporary difficulties, or to have our own theories of Church order, whatever they may be, confirmed by the historical evidence for the origin and development of the Ministry in its earliest days. The days are gone when ecclesiastical controversialists could hope to find in the pages of the New Testament full and explicit directions for the constitution of the Church, a 'blue print,' to use a fashionable though inaccurate term, for the future ordering of its Ministry, and so to obtain the direct warrant of the highest possible authority for episcopalianism, presbyterianism, or independency. The past century of historical criticism has altogether ruled out any such possibility. Yet it is still tempting to approach the documents of the primitive Church with the object of gaining some confirmation for modern theologies of ministerial order, such as the theory of an 'essential ministry' propounded in 'The Apostolic Ministry,' or modern forms of the doctrines of apostolic succession or of the transmission of sacramental grace.

Unfortunately for our pressing contemporary preoccupations, the primitive Church refuses to answer our questions, at least directly, for the good reason that it was not interested in the things which most perplex us. The modern tendency is to seek to establish a doctrine of the Ministry and to work from that as its starting

point to a doctrine of the Church; that is to say, to look to the Ministry to guarantee the Church's authenticity and wholeness. From the standpoint of the New Testament this is in fact, as I have suggested elsewhere, a putting of the cart before the horse. For the early Christians the Church came first; ministries, with one vitally important exception, were secondary. They did not think of the Church as a constitutionally organized body whose gospel and sacraments were guaranteed by that organization. Though in fact the primitive congregations evidently possessed much in common, so far as their organization and their external aspect are concerned, with the many and various religious societies and social clubs which swarmed in the cities of the Empire, the Church as such could not be regarded as dependent for its true being, the authenticity of its message, and the validity of its sacraments, upon its constitutional form of government, as secular societies depended upon the guarantee of legal forms and constitutional authority.

The Church was an eschatological society, a Remnant of the redeemed awaiting the return of the Lord and the final transformation, of which they already possessed the first fruits. The Remnant, whether in Old or New Testament thought, was not constituted by its hierarchy; it was not to be identified by its possession of the authentic high-priestly succession. It was constituted by the saving act of God and identified by its possession of a new status conferred by Him alone. The primitive Church was constituted by the saving act of God in Christ, proclaimed in the apostolic preaching, responded to by the converts' faith, and symbolically re-presented to each believer in the rite of baptism through which he became Christ's man — 'entered up' in the name of Jesus Messiah — and consequently a sharer in Jesus' Messianic anointing with the Holy Spirit. The Church, therefore, was brought into being in each place to which it spread through the 'hearing of faith' and identified by that possession of the Spirit of God to which St. Paul points as the obvious and incontrovertible result of this hearing of the Gospel.

First-century Christianity was dominated, to an extent which it is often difficult for us to realize in our modern situation, by the most vivid consciousness of the Church as the society of the Spirit. With their intensely strong eschatological outlook, the first believers were convinced that as a matter of demonstrable fact the promised age to come had already begun to dawn and would shortly be manifested in its full glory. They had already received the 'first instalment' of the Holy Spirit of promise. They had been made 'partakers of the Holy Spirit, and . . . the powers of

the age to come.' Within their society those powers were visibly operative, whether in the form of the sensational spiritual phenomena which so easily impressed the semi-pagan converts to the Church at Corinth or in the more profound experience of the new power of *agape* which was in truth the Spirit's greatest gift. That society was the sphere in which the risen Christ operated and communicated Himself to men in and through the Spirit. Ideally, therefore, the community could be described as the body of Christ, or the temple of the Spirit, and even when it fell most grievously short of that ideal, its faults, at any rate at Corinth, were those peculiar to a society of enthusiasts dominated by the conviction that they were Spirit-possessed. Christ, mediating His saving work and His continuing presence through the Holy Spirit, was the ground of the Church's existence and the source of authority. The Spirit was the directing and energizing power in the Church's mission to the world, bringing into being the life of the new creation in which all previous distinctions of race and status were done away.

In such a society, questions of constitutional order could possess relatively little significance. The primitive Church was not, indeed, anarchical. On the contrary, it developed with no little skill effective and flexible forms of ministry and organization. But it could not, in the nature of things, be concerned with the long-term planning of a system of ministerial order which should guarantee its survival as an historical institution down the long ages of the future and the transmission of the endowment of the Spirit and His gifts of grace. Its perspective of the future was foreshortened to a degree which would render such a course impossible in the earliest days. Even when the perspective began to lengthen, the eschatological outlook of Christian believers remained remarkably clear; they were conscious of living in the interim period between the Resurrection and the Parousia, in a socety which was an earnest of the coming redemption of the world. However long the interim period might last, it could not be easy for them to attach primary theological importance to the establishment and continuity of ministerial institutions, and it would clearly run counter to their overwhelming sense of living a new social and individual life under the impact of a fresh and mighty movement of the Spirit of God to suggest that such provisions were necessary in order to ensure the maintenance of that movement and its consequences in the worshipping and social life of the Church.

To suppose their necessity would appear to entail a reversal of the roles of the Word and the Spirit on the one hand, and of the Ministry on the other. The many and varied ministries which

the primitive Church possessed were, as the Epistle to the Ephesians explains, gifts of the risen Christ to the Church, and, as the whole body of New Testament literature implies, endowments of the Spirit for the increase and edification of the Spirit-possessed society. They depend upon and are controlled by the Spirit operating in the Body; neither the Spirit nor the Body are dependent upon particular forms of ministry or their continuity, necessary and indispensable as ministries are for the proper functioning of the Church as Christ's Body.

The ministries of the early Church existed, as all forms of Christian ministry must, to serve three main purposes: the missionary task of spreading the gospel, the consolidation and building up of the Christian communities thus brought into being, and the Christian service of all kinds which is denoted by the term *diaconia* and which reflects in the Church's life the activity of Christ who 'came not to be ministered unto but to minister.' These functions necessarily overlap to a large extent; but the appointment of the Seven shows that the sphere of practical social and charitable organization was regarded by the Twelve at Jerusalem as lying outside their peculiar province, which was the missionary task of ministering the word, and, although (as the traditions of Papias, Polycrates, and Irenaeus, about St. John suggest) apostles may have sometimes settled down as more or less permanent heads of local communities, the work of building up and directing those communities seems to have been generally entrusted to local ministries of presbyters or *episcopoi* as distinct from the apostles and other missionaries. The developments in the organization of the Ministry, which took place towards the end of the first century, seem to have been largely dictated by the inauguration of a period of consolidation after the rapid missionary expansion of the apostolic age, with a consequently greater emphasis upon the local ministries concerned with that work.

The emphasis in the New Testament is laid upon function rather than on ministerial status or official position. For the most part the titles of the Church's ministers are descriptions of function rather than technically defined terms indicative of settled orders or ranks. The interest of the New Testament writers is centred upon the Spirit and His authority rather than on the particular medium by which the Spirit's power and authority were believed to be conferred upon those who carried out the various ministerial functions. We must not forget that the primitive Church possessed no professional priesthood in the modern sense, and that it is clear from the narrative of *Acts* that no inconsiderable part of the early missionary enterprise was performed by unknown

Christians who may have received no particular ministerial title. Our documents are concerned with the Spirit's activity in the Church, and comparatively rarely give us definite information about the precise method by which the Church's ministers received their commission and authority. One thing, however, is common to all the varied types of ministries in the early Church. Like Jesus Himself, who as the Synoptists and the Fourth Gospel assert so strongly, was 'sent' by the Father, those who exercise them are sent out and commissioned by Christ, either during the earthly ministry or, as with St. Paul, by a special revelation, or through the Spirit in the post-Ascension Church. With them, as with Jesus, the divine sending is most closely related to authority. Authority is derived from Christ's commission, whether we consider the instance of the Twelve and the Seventy during the Galilaean Ministry, the commissioning of the Eleven to evangelize all the nations, or the authority which St. Paul claims to have received from the Lord for the edifying of the Church at Corinth. Christ's commission and His bestowal of authority through the Spirit in the Church stand out in the New Testament as the essential qualification for every sort of ministry, not only the apostleship whose name is derived from it, but the 'oversight' exercised by the elders of Ephesus, the ministry of Saul and Barnabas in their first journey from Antioch, and the special tasks laid upon such Christians as Ananias at Damascus. The possession of the Lord's commission and authority is not necessarily connected with appointment by apostles or by their representatives. The New Testament knows nothing of the supposed mutually exclusive doctrines of ministerial authority which are sometimes presented to us to-day — one in which that authority is believed to be conferred from above by Christ's commission transmitted through the channel of apostolical succession, the other in which it is believed to be conferred from below by delegation from the community. It knows only of Christ's commission and authority conferred from above; not, however, through a particular hierarchical channel, but through the Spirit in the Body.

This primary note of divine appointment is, of course, as we have suggested, especially plain in the case of apostles. So long as the apostles themselves were at work, the apostolic ministry was indeed the essential ministry. I do not mean by this phrase that the apostles were, as the modern bishop is said to be by the authors of *The Apostolic Ministry*, solely entrusted with the ordination of 'dependent' ministers, the consecration of their own successors and, in person or through delegates, the administration of the sacraments. Their ministry is essential in a fuller and

deeper sense; they are the essential ministers of the word; for in their case, and in theirs alone, the gospel is in a sense dependent upon the existence of a particular ministry (Faith, as we might say, upon Order). They are the witnesses to the truth of the Church's preaching; they alone can guarantee its authenticity; and it is not too much to say that they are not merely preachers of the gospel, but themselves a part of the gospel which they proclaim. By the time we reach the relatively early date of *Ephesians*, they, together with the prophets of the old dispensation (for so I understand the passage), are regarded as the foundation upon which the Church's entire structure rests. That is to say, the apostles, as inspired preachers, teachers, and leaders, upon whose guarantee as Christ's commissioned witnesses the truth of its message rests, are believed to stand in the closest relationship in the divine plan of history to those inspired men who pointed forward to the events which form the content of that message and whose prophecies, read in the Church in the light of the apostolic preaching, illuminate the preaching's significance and are themselves made intelligible by reference to it.

The importance and significance of the apostolate in the early Church can scarcely be strongly enough emphasized. Yet the origin, nature, and limits of the apostolic ministry are by no means easy to discover. The Twelve are evidently to some extent in a class by themselves within a wider apostolate. The problem of their status and function is complicated by the different treatment which they receive from various New Testament writers. The Evangelists, with the notable exception of Luke, do not regard the Twelve as men formally endowed with the office of 'apostle.' They use the term but rarely (once in each Gospel, apart from its insertion from Luke in the Alexandrian text of *Mk.* iii, 14), and the single instance of its employment in the Fourth Gospel is quite untechnical and has no direct connection with a particular ministry (xiii, 16). To some extent the difference in this respect between Luke and the other Evangelists is only verbal, for in the Marcan account the Twelve are 'sent' and endowed with authority, and are therefore in fact what is meant by 'apostles.' Yet the verbal difference implies a real change of emphasis. Mark and Matthew evidently think of the Twelve's commission as conferred for a particular function, namely, 'that they might be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach and to have power to cast out demons' (*Mk.* iii, 14). They do not share the Lucan conception of the Twelve as being from the first a body of officially constituted ecclesiastical leaders, endowed with the formal status of 'apostleship.'

How the Twelve carried out their commission is not an easy matter to determine. The attempt to explain their status and function in terms of the Jewish *shaliachate* has already been often enough shown to have completely failed.

Holl's remark that the 'shaliach idea contributes almost nothing to the elucidation of the Christian apostolate' is certainly right; perhaps the word 'almost' should be dropped. We may briefly remind ourselves that the evidence for the organized Jewish *shaliachate* is mainly derived from fourth-century and later sources, that there is little likelihood that the institution existed in the first century when the temple tax was not collected by *shelichim*, but sent by representatives of the Diaspora synagogues; that the supposed delegation of authority to such officials by means of the imposition of hands (mentioned by Rengstorf in his article on *apostolos* in Kittel's Wörterbuch) is supported only by a misrendering of *cheirotoneo* in a passage from Justin (*Dial.* 108.2) concerning Jewish missionaries in general and that the alleged parallel between their habit of travelling in pairs and that of the Apostles rests solely upon the Venosa inscription's 'duo apostoli, duo rabbites' (C.I.L. 9.648), which is insufficient to establish any such custom, and would in any case imply that the custom was followed by rabbis as well as by *shelichim*. If, as Krauss and Vogelstein asserted, the Christian apostolate is derived less from the patriarchal *shelichim* than from such commissioned individuals in Jewish history as Ezra (*Ez.* vii, 14-25) or Jehoshaphat's travelling company of priestly and Levitical teachers (II *Chron.* xvii, 9), it is exceedingly odd that the LXX did not see fit to use *apostolos* in translating these passages, and that the Greek term is found only in II *Kings* xiv, 6, where it is quite untechnical and has no official significance at all. It is also strange that the passages about the Twelve which most strongly remind us of Jewish descriptions of *shelichim* are *Mk.* iii, 14, and *Jo.* xiii, 16, of which, as we have seen, the former does not contain the word *apostolos* except in an inferior text, and the latter contains no direct reference to the apostolic office as such. The Twelve, as agents sent out by Jesus to act on his behalf, were, of course, his *shelichim* in the ordinary sense of personal representatives with power to act for him. To say as much is to state the obvious, but it throws no further light on the nature or scope of their commission and certainly does not imply that they received unlimited plenipotentiary powers. Nothing solid can be built upon so exiguous a foundation as the *shaliach* theory.

The Twelve do in fact act as deputies for Christ when they try to cure the epileptic boy; they carry out the same commission as

their Master in confining their ministry of preaching and healing to 'the lost sheep of the house of Israel'; but their activities as missionary 'apostles' during the period of the earthly ministry are necessarily slight. They must have consisted in proclaiming the advent of the Kingdom of God and presumably in exorcisms. That they still failed to recognize the character of the person and mission of Jesus even after their return from their expedition as his agents is evidence of its very limited scope. Their missionary instructions, which Luke for the most part assigns to the Seventy, probably represent a reading back into this period of the sort of work which they were to accomplish after Pentecost. More important (from the Marcan—Matthean standpoint) than their early missionary functions is their eschatological significance. The emphasis is laid, so to speak, upon their 'twelveness' rather than their 'apostolicity.' Their *names* were in part forgotten or confused; their *number* was remembered and regarded as highly significant. They are the patriarchs of the new Israel, or perhaps more correctly the 'princes of Israel, being twelve men: they were each one for his fathers' house' of *Num.* i, 44; that is, they are the representatives of the Remnant which is to inherit the Kingdom. Possibly their number is also connected with the twelve representatives sent into the Promised Land as an advanced guard to spy it out (*Dt.* i, 23). They are, in any case, the pledge and symbol of the final sealing of the tribes pictured in the Apocalypse, and they are destined to share in the reign of the Son of Man at the 'regeneration.' In the Lucan version of this passage, they are given the promise that they are to sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel, and the thought of that promise may well underlie the post-Resurrection question whether the time of the kingdom's restoration to Israel had now arrived. It was apparently still deemed essential in the period between the Resurrection and Pentecost to bring the number up to twelve after Judas' fall. When James the Apostle meets his death there is apparently no longer any such necessity; a significant change has occurred in the nature of the Twelve's position and function.

How and when that change took place it is hard to determine. Matthew, Luke, and the Fourth Evangelist speak of a recommissioning of the Eleven after the Resurrection when the risen Christ lays upon them the new task of being witnesses to the ends of the earth, evangelists and baptizers of all the nations, and entrusts them with that power of binding and loosing which the First Gospel assigns to them during the earthly ministry. The episode recorded in *St. John*, however, probably represents an interpretation of the Lucan Pentecost. Whatever may have been the exact

mode by which the inner circle of disciples became conscious of their new status and function now that Israel had rejected the Messiah, the triumph of the Resurrection had happened, but the Parousia had not immediately taken place, it seems clear that it was their conviction that Christ had risen and that the message of his Messiahship and its implications had to be publicly proclaimed that caused them to see themselves as witnesses and missionaries rather than as sharers in the enthroned sovereignty of the Son of Man. Even if they received no formal recommissioning, their leadership and authority in the early community are readily to be inferred from the qualifications demanded of Judas' successor. They had been the close companions of Jesus; they were the foundation members of the society, and thus the representatives of Christ, as well as the principal witnesses to the Resurrection on which the existence of the Church was grounded. Even at the time when it was still thought necessary to bring their number up to twelve, it was, in Luke's view, primarily as a witness to the Resurrection that Matthias was appointed.

They were the leaders of the small group upon which, again in Luke's view, the promised outpouring of the Spirit had been bestowed, the sign of the age of fulfilment. In his narrative in *Acts* special emphasis is laid upon the status of the apostles as bearers of the Spirit. In what is apparently a proleptic summing up of their future missionary task, they preach the gospel in the power of the Spirit to assembled representatives of all the nations; in the authority and power of the Spirit which had rested upon Jesus they perform similar mighty works to His; and by the symbol of mutual identification and 'solidarity' they transmit the Pentecostal Spirit to certain converts.

Luke does not suppose that these functions and gifts were confined to the Twelve; his conception of the apostolate is far wider, and he thinks in terms of apostolate rather than of 'twelveness,' for he looks back upon the Palestinian period of the Church in the light of later Gentile Christianity. But for him the Twelve are the natural leaders of the apostolic mission and the natural leaders of the primitive community in Jerusalem. St. Paul lays less emphasis than does St. Luke on the status of the Twelve. He is explicitly concerned with them only in connection with the Resurrection tradition of which they were guarantors, he knows of other apostles besides the Twelve, and he does not seem to regard the latter, like Luke, as *the* apostles.

We are, indeed, left with very little information about the Twelve's subsequent activities. We hear in detail only of Peter and of John as his usually silent associate. As early as *Galatians*,

they alone appear to be present in Jerusalem, the third 'pillar' being James, who now shares the full status of an apostle, though he was not among the Twelve. It is not impossible that some were included in the 'apostles and elders' whom we find under the presidency of James in *Acts* xv, 2; but it is unlikely. The tradition of *Mt.* xxviii, 19, on which the legends of the apocryphal acts were based, presumably rests upon a true memory that they left Jerusalem to travel. In any case, they disappear from the scene at an early date.

The other 'apostles' whom we meet in the New Testament, except where they are 'apostles' in the secondary sense of deputies of local congregations, like Epaphroditus or the 'apostles of churches' of II *Cor.* viii, 23 (here, incidentally, is our nearest approach to a '*shaliachate*') are, to judge from the personal history of St. Paul and from his reference to 'all the apostles' in I *Cor.* xv, 7, where they are distinguished from 500 brethren who had also seen the risen Lord, men qualified to be witnesses of the Resurrection and commissioned in some way by him as missionary preachers. To this class presumably belong Adronicus and Junias, and possibly Apollos, whose status was high enough for him to be a rival to Peter in the affections of the Corinthian Church. If the Seventy are historical, such apostles may belong to their number, but it seems likely that the sending of the Seventy is due either to amplification by Luke of the traditional presentation of Christ as *Moses redivivus*, or to a reading back by him into the Galilaean ministry of the post-Pentecostal mission to the Gentile world.

It is possible that the term apostle was used in the first century in an even wider sense to denote any travelling missionary pioneer. Such may be Luke's intention when he describes Barnabas as well as Paul as an apostle during their first journey. In that case, however, we should expect Timothy to be so described. Later this use becomes established in certain quarters, and it is reflected in the *Didache*, in the fairly frequent patristic allusions to Timothy as an apostle, and in the designation of Thecla as *apostolos* in one MS. of the *Acts of Paul and Thecla.*

The questions which chiefly concern us are these. Were the apostles, either in the sense of the Twelve or in the wider meaning, the 'essential ministry' in the sense, not of essential ministers of the word (which they most certainly were), but of sole ministers of ordination and sacraments? To what extent did they transmit their status and functions to successors?

The evidence for the answer to the first question is largely indirect. The primitive Church was a missionary Church, and the appointment and maintenance of its ministry was carried out on the

lines which must always be followed in some respects by pioneer missionaries. That is to say, the travelling preacher, having established a congregation of converts, must provide for the ordered life of that community by selecting the senior and responsible men from among its ranks and entrusting them with its spiritual, liturgical, and social leadership and the duty of building and maintaining its organization. This was done by Paul and Barnabas in Asia Minor and presumably by other apostles elsewhere. Clement of Rome looks back to the appointment of local overseers and *diaconoi* by the apostles; these officers were the 'first-fruits' of the apostles' converts and their task was to 'oversee,' and minister to, future recruits. Provision was made for the continuance of their ministry in succession to its original holders, should these die — how, it is not stated. Where a church was founded by an apostle, he would naturally select and appoint its first ministers, always, to judge by the statements of *Acts* and Clement and by later practice, with the consent of the whole community. There is no evidence that the ministry was so appointed in all cases, and a strong probability that it was not. A church such as that at Rome, presumably founded by non-apostolic preachers, would not wait for an organized ministry until an apostle arrived, and there is no evidence that such preachers, or the prophets and teachers at Antioch, had received a special commission to ordain as delegates of an apostle. The laying on of hands, the ancient sign of blessing and of the imparting of authority was not, so far as our positive evidence goes, confined to the holders of a particular office in the Church, and it is intrinsically probable that in the apostolic age many were ordained by what Clement calls *ellogimoi andres*, the term (probably signifying men elect of God) by which he denotes missionary leaders of the sub-apostolic period.

Nor is there evidence that the apostles were the sole ministers, in person or by delegates, of sacraments. In the case of Baptism the remarks of St. Paul to the Corinthians are positively against such a theory, and the later history of the rite strongly suggests the contrary. We may observe that so late a writer as Basil of Seleucia speaks of Thecla 'sealing' many converts in Asia — a problem for those who understand sealing to mean Confirmation and at the same time regard the latter as an apostolic-episcopal prerogative in the early centuries. In fact, of course, he means 'baptizing.' The leader of the community, an apostle, if he were present, a Spirit-possessed prophet as in the *Didache*, a presiding elder, Justin's vague *proestos*, or a monarchical bishop would be the natural celebrant of the Eucharist, and this function certainly has much to do with the rise of non-episcopacy; but we are not told

that the celebrant acted as a delegate for an apostle if he did not possess that status himself.

The presence of apostles at Samaria to 'confirm' Philip's converts does not imply that confirmation, if it existed as a regular rite in the apostolic age, was administered solely by apostles. Such a view leads to a maze of contradictions. The situation there was exceptional. A ratification of the Samaritans' admission to the Church by the reception of the sign of personal solidarity and blessing from the two heads of the Jerusalem community was needed before they were enabled to share in the Pentecostal Spirit. At Ephesus, similarly, St. Paul lays his hands on the first-fruits of the Church there, men who had received only a baptism of expectation and preparation, and so imparts by personal contact the missionary Spirit of tongues and prophecy. He is creating a new centre of the missionary enterprise, and a renewed or secondary Pentecost takes place. These episodes are not typical of Christian initiation at this time. One might cite St. Paul's own baptism and 'confirmation' by a layman; but the term might be incorrect, since for the purpose of visiting Paul Ananias, who had seen the Lord and been sent by Him, may be held to rank as an apostle.

The question how far the apostles' office was perpetuated is more difficult. The peculiar function of the Twelve, witness to the Resurrection from personal knowledge, and the authority of men who had been close personal disciples of Jesus, could not in the nature of things be transmitted. No one could inherit their special position, shared by St. Paul and perhaps in some degree by other New Testament apostles, of being in a sense a part of the *kerygma* itself. There is insufficient evidence to show that they appointed successors to exercise a general supervision over the whole Church, even in the reduced sense of an apostolic supervision which could not rest upon the foundation of personal knowledge of, and commissioning by, the incarnate Lord.

No attempt was made to recruit the number of the Twelve after the death of James; Clement of Alexandria is the first to suggest that James, the Lord's brother, was appointed in place of his namesake. The former was probably an apostle in his own right, as one to whom, according to tradition, the risen Christ had appeared and to whom a commission may have been entrusted by Him. He enjoyed a unique status as the head of the family of Jesus; and his position as the leader of the Jerusalem Church, assisted by a *consilium* of elders, may possibly have been developed in deliberate imitation of the high priest and sanhedrim of the Jewish system. He could therefore exercise apostolic functions, both of witness and jurisdiction, and in the light of such Jewish-Christian hankerings

after the old order as the writer to the Hebrews is concerned to dispel, it is conceivable that if the history of the original Jerusalem Church had been more fortunate, something in the nature of a high-priestly succession in the Church might have come into being there. Polycrates' allusion to John as the wearer of a *petalon*, if it has any historical foundation, might be connected with such developments; but the possibility is remote. In the event, though James' position probably contributed to the emergence of the monarchical episcopate, it cannot be said that it produced any perpetuation of the apostolate, except in so far as every later bishop exercised certain functions that originally belonged to apostles.

'Apostolic men' such as Timothy and Titus hold a peculiar and important position in the closing years of the apostolic age. Leaders who had been in close touch with the apostles would inevitably occupy a place of prestige and authority as the original apostolate died out, and their work of teaching, safeguarding the deposit of apostolic witness, and organizing churches over wide areas, is similar, taking into account the changed circumstances, to that of St. Paul. There is, however, no evidence that they were ordained by apostles as their personal successors and representatives. The hands of St. Paul were laid on Timothy, but unless II *Tim.* i, 6, contradicts I *Tim.* iv, 14, the apostle acted only as part of a group of elders or senior men, and the spiritual grace thereby bestowed appears to be connected chiefly with the prophetic gift; that is to say, it is a transference of the ministry of the word. These quasi-apostolic figures are probably closely akin in status and function to the sub-apostolic leaders such as Polycarp, Papias, Aristion, and before them, perhaps, the elder John, who are regarded by Irenaeus as the fountain-head of the Church's doctrinal tradition as it had come down to him.

More important is the question whether the monarchical bishop is to be regarded as an apostle. We are not told by our most ancient documents that the apostles consecrated bishops to be their successors; Clement of Rome will not bear that interpretation. The 'bishops' of the New Testament appear from *Ac.* xx, 17, 28, and *Phil.* i, 1, to be the same people as the presbyters, but considered in respect of the functions they perform rather than of their status as seniors in the community. The appointment of a single elder to preside as a sole *episcopos* may have taken place early in some churches, just as in others, such as Rome, it was certainly long delayed. Such a step would be of obvious practical convenience, and the need for one man to preside at the Eucharist would clearly hasten it. Some division of functions among the elders is already indicated by the allusion in I *Tim.* v, 17, to certain presbyters who

'laboured in word and teaching.' The example of James at Jerusalem probably contributed to the development of the monarchical episcopate, as no doubt did that of the 'apostolic men' and perhaps of John at Ephesus. Perhaps the most potent factor was the need to consolidate the Church's life, organization, and teaching in the face of heresy and disruptive influences. Hence the bishop becomes for Ignatius the focus and guarantee of unity, teaching, and sacramental worship.

What is so far lacking in the story of the monarchical episcopate, so far as it can be reconstructed by inference, is the idea of apostolic succession or of the bishop as an apostle. He is, indeed, the ruler of his church, and so exercises a jurisdiction comparable with that of an apostle over the communities which he might establish. He is its leader in worship, as the apostles had been when they were present in a church. He directs the practical and business side of its life, assisted by deacons, and we know from St. Paul's handling of the Jerusalem collection that such matters were dealt with by apostles; and he is a teacher, as the apostles had been, though the *Didache* allows this only when no prophets or teachers are available. The bishop certainly inherits many of the functions discharged by apostles, though his is a local ministry and not that of a pioneer missionary.

Yet even Ignatius, the most vigorous champion of the necessity of episcopacy, does not connect it with the perpetuation of the apostolate. His bishop is not said to be the successor or representative of the apostles. He is rather the representative of God or Christ; that is to say, he speaks with divine authority (Ignatius was a Spirit-possessed prophet himself), and possibly, in Ignatius' view, he represents Christ by occupying His place at the Eucharistic table. No evidence from the period between the New Testament and the later part of the second century suggests that the importance of episcopacy lies in its perpetuation of the apostolic succession.

It is when we reach the time of Hegesippus and of Irenaeus that we find the principle of succession emphasized as being of primary importance. The former seems to have been to some extent an antiquarian, interested in Palestinian Christian origins, especially in the ancient Jewish church at Jerusalem, and he was perhaps himself influenced by the Jewish concern for priestly genealogies and successions. But the principle of succession was vitally important for Irenaeus, and probably for Hegesippus as well, not for archaeological reasons but as the Church's safeguard against disruption and confusion caused by Gnosticism, Marcion, and the Montanist movement. The apostolic tradition of doctrine was in

grave danger of becoming submerged in the rush of new and often pseudo-apostolic teaching, and until the canon of apostolic Scriptures had become more or less clearly defined the Church had to depend for its authentic tradition upon the witness of those communities whose continuous doctrinal tradition from the apostles themselves was believed to be demonstrable by reference to the continuity of their organized ministry, and in particular of an ascertainable succession of bishops. What Irenaeus calls 'the succession of bishops to whom the apostles entrusted the Church universal' is primarily a teaching succession, somewhat resembling that of the teachers in the philosophical schools. It is a succession of office rather than of persons. What matters is that the episcopal teacher's chair should be shown to have been continuously occupied since the days of the apostolic preaching; its occupant could then claim to be the exponent of a far older tradition than that proclaimed by the Gnostics, and to represent the accredited doctrine of the Church which possessed the Spirit of truth. The idea of the transmission of grace from one occupant of the chair to the next is scarcely present; indeed, the theory of teaching succession is applied only to those Churches which could claim to be apostolic foundations. It is unlikely that Irenaeus attached importance to the apostolic succession of bishops elsewhere, for it is distinctly improbable that he was consecrated himself by bishops in such a succession.

The same conception of the episcopal succession as the guarantee and preservative of orthodoxy is found in Tertullian's challenge to the heretics to produce the lists of their bishops and show the origins of their Churches. Origen, however, tends to find the true successors of the apostles, not in bishops, but in teachers. It is they who have received by succession the rule (*i.e.* of faith) which the apostles received from Christ. This difference is not surprising in view of Origen's own status and career, and the possibility, far more likely than Bishop Gore allowed, that until 231 the Bishop of Alexandria was consecrated by his presbyters and so could not possibly stand in a lineal descent of tactual succession from the apostles. In any case, the important thing is the succession of true doctrine, that is, the continued ministry of the apostles' witness. This is maintained by the bishops or official teachers as the authorized exponents of the Church's faith. To a large extent this vitally important function of bishops, linking them with the apostles in the ministry of the word, passed over into the canon of Scripture and ceased to be necessary; but until the canon was stabilized it was carried on in the manner exemplified in Serapion of Antioch's treatment of the supposedly apostolic *Gospel of*

Peter; such a work could not be accepted on its claim to apostolicity alone, but had to be tested by the degree to which its contents harmonized with the received tradition of apostolic doctrine. There still remained the need to safeguard the tradition of interpretation of the canonical books. Heracleon's exposition of St. John was no more allowable than the publication of a fresh and heretical apocryphon. Liturgical tradition had also to be preserved by the apostolic succession of bishops; thus Narcissus of Jerusalem cites the tradition handed down by succession from the apostles to support his dating of Easter.

By the third century, then, bishops preserve the deposit of the apostolic *kerygma* and practice, and exercise locally the functions which apostles had performed in a wider field. In the *Apostolic Tradition* of Hippolytus, the bishop is very close to being an apostle; he is a shepherd, he offers the Eucharistic gifts, has authority to forgive and to loose, and to appoint ministers. Prayer is made at his consecration for the gift of the Spirit of ruling which was bestowed on the apostles. It is not, however, suggested that this is passed on to him by succession. The ancient emphasis is laid rather on the continuity of the Spirit in the Church as the principle of its ordered life.

Apostles had not been the only men in the primitive Church specially gifted with endowments of the Spirit. Prophets rank next after apostles in the Pauline list in I *Cor.* xii, 28, and the New Testament, especially the Lucan writings, are full of the thought that the Christian dispensation has seen a revival of prophecy after its long disappearance. The new outburst of prophecy was linked with the old by being related to the expectation of Joel, by the equation of the Baptist with Elijah, and by the Christian conviction that the theme of both was the same. Prophets, as inspired preachers, shared in the missionary task with the apostles, and, as the examples of Agabus and others show, played a very prominent part in the direction of the Church's work. In the sub-apostolic age the *Didache* makes it clear that the duly attested prophet is infallible, however strange may be the things which he does; Hermas shows prophets occupying the *protocathedria* at Christian assemblies; and as we again learn from the *Didache*, a prophet, when he is available, is the chief minister of word and sacrament. Ignatius, Polycarp, and Melito probably owe their high place in the Church in no small measure to the fact that they were prophets; we know of other early prophets such as Quadratus in Asia; and it is possible that something like a prophetic succession might have been maintained alongside the episcopal succession had not prophecy become discredited, partly by the scandal of false

prophets, and still more by its aberration from the apostolic tradition in the persons of Montanus and his ladies, so that, as Epiphanius put it, God appointed a time-limit for the exercise in the Church of the prophetic gift. Teaching and preaching, therefore, became the prerogative of the bishop, and the challenge to the spiritual authority of the Cyprianic bishop was to come less from prophets than from other men in whom the Spirit was believed to be peculiarly present, namely, confessors. Both ministries, however, the episcopal and the prophetic, are alike means by which the abiding Spirit in the Church found expression and the ministry of the word was maintained.

The factor which in the end transformed the early conception of the ministry and promoted the theory of an apostolic-episcopal transmission of sacerdotal grace was the identification of the Christian ministry with the Old Testament priesthood. The process may be said to begin in the analogies employed by the writer to the Hebrews, though his purpose is to explain the priesthood of Christ and its superiority to the Aaronic order. It appears in the general comparison made by Clement between the Levitical orders and the Christian clergy as a whole. The *Didache* justifies the payment of gifts in kind to prophets on the ground that they are high priests — presumably on the theory that Aaron was a prophet as spokesman for Moses. Hippolytus regards the bishop as the possessor of a high-priestly character, and the development reaches a climax in the *Apostolic Constitutions* where the bishop is high priest, the Christian representative of Aaron, ruler, and king.

The theory is of course bound up with the development of the various early forms of the doctrine of the Eucharist as a sacrifice typified by the Hebrew sacrifices. The term *sacerdos* and *hiereus* are used in the late second and third centuries to denote the celebrant, that is, in the first instance and most commonly, the bishop, and secondarily the presbyter.

Here we have the really important development; one which on the whole I must characterize as unscriptural, tending to obscure the truth of Christ's high-priesthood, and to substitute a multiciplicity of individual priests for the priestly Body which is so central to New Testament theology.

If we try in conclusion to sum up some results of this study, we must, I think, assert that, while they are mainly inconclusive, so far as our present-day problems are concerned, they suggest that the essential ministry is that by which the apostolic witness is handed on in Word and Sacrament; that this is not tied by Christ or his apostles to a particular ministerial form; that there is insufficient warrant for apostolic succession, particularly in the

modern forms of the theory; and that the principle of continuity lies in the Spirit in the Church mediating to it the presence of Christ. I believe it is possible to maintain that the episcopate, as it developed under the Spirit's guidance, is a means by which those aspects of apostleship which could be perpetuated were, and are, continued in the Church, and that it is eminently possible on the basis of Scripture and early tradition to assert the value and importance of episcopacy in the sense in which Hooker and the main line of pre-nineteenth-century Anglican teaching affirmed it; but that it is not possible for us to reverse the roles of Hooker and his Puritan opponents and declare that one form of Church government is laid down in the New Testament as part of the gospel — in this case episcopacy.

The real crux which confronts us, as the study of the early centuries suggests and as Anglo-Catholics have recently been rightly pointing out, is the doctrine of priesthood. It is this, rather than the theory of episcopacy, which divides us, and behind it again, as in the period of the Reformation, lie the problems of Eucharistic theology. The study of early Church history cannot help us to make much progress towards a solution of our difficulties over ecclesiastical order, though it should teach us a fuller and finer doctrine of the Church itself. It can only warn us to avoid or discard rigid theories of the ministry. We cannot, I believe, expect to advance far until we face the crucial questions of priesthood and sacrifice, and in that direction we are likely soon to reach a point where Evangelicals, 'liberal' or otherwise, have to join in making a stand.

FACTORS IN THE DEVELOPMENT AND EXPANSION OF THE EARLY CHURCH

By P. Gardner-Smith, B.D., Fellow of Jesus College, Cambridge, author of *St. John and the Synoptic Gospels, The Narratives of the Resurrection*, etc.

THE expansion and development of the Christian Church in the first three centuries is indeed one of the miracles of history. In A.D. 35 the Church consisted of a handful of eccentric Jews; in 350 it controlled the emperors and was rapidly absorbing the population of the Roman world. No wonder that such a critic as Julian could see the irrationality of it all. Judaea, a remote and despised province, giving a religion to the world. Jesus, the humble subject of 'one of my predecessors, Augustus,' now exalted above the gods of Rome. His followers, unlettered fishermen, but now 'the twelve Apostles' whose tombs, like the graves of all those other 'dead fellows,' inspired the devotion of thousands. Could anything be more absurd? The feeling that the growth of Christianity was a challenge to reason was constantly manifested among the intelligentsia of the first three centuries. To Pliny it was 'a wicked and arrogant superstition.' Celsus jeered at the humble origin of Jesus. Minucius Felix put into the mouth of Caecilius a protest against the presumption of the Christians in meddling with questions of philosophy which they did not understand. The Hellenistic world was proud of its culture, and even its religion could claim the respect due to antiquity; yet culture and religion were being assailed, ridiculed, and conquered in the name of a novel and vulgar superstition by a crowd of nobodies who had no traditions, no philosophy, no literature worthy of the name, and no temples, who lived as rebels and who died as fools. It must have been hard to bear.

Historians must seek an explanation of this seeming impossibility. For a Christian the sufficient answer to the problem of the Church's victory is to be found in the grace and providence of God. We need not commit ourselves to a philosophy of history which sees in every event the finger of God, or exclaim with Amos, 'Shall a city fall, and the Lord hath not done it?'; but few of us would abandon altogether the belief that the course of history is in the hands of the world's Creator. That is the biblical faith. There is a plan of history, and if in His own good time God was revealed by His *Logos*, it is not surprising that the light of the Gospel spread over the world. But such an admission does not

rule out some enquiry as to the factors which, under God, made the Church's expansion possible. The natural and supernatural views of history are not in rivalry. One is the complement of the other.

That the circumstances of the first three centuries were peculiarly favourable to the spread of Christianity has often been remarked, and we need not linger on familiar ground. The existence of the Roman Empire which bound all peoples together in a political and economic federation, the unique facilities for travel, the widespread knowledge of Greek and Latin, the spirit of liberalism which, although it may have been founded on scepticism, delivered the world from an *odium theologicum* which would have been a greater bar to Christian propaganda than the political suspicion of the Roman magistrate. The Church had a fair field, and if there was no favour, there was during the first vital period no planned attempt to stamp out Christianity. That came later, but then it was too late.

Let us pass from the external circumstances which favoured the spread of Christianity to the positive factors which illustrate and explain its growing strength. Three may be selected: the efficiency of the Church's organization, the character of her teaching, and the moral witness of her members.

No early Church historian can fail to be impressed by the efficiency of the organization which was rapidly built up to direct and control the lives of Christian believers. It enabled a small local society to become in an incredibly short time a world-wide Catholic Church. The early stages of this growth are in many ways obscure, and the imagination of later ages has been free to project its own convictions into the past. The innocent falsification of history began early. According to *Acts*, the first Church at Jerusalem was a close corporation with its own accepted government, its own very definite rules of conduct, and its own planned economy. The authority of the Apostles was not questioned, and the Church lived under the direct guidance of the Holy Spirit. Soon the original society began to expand. Believers were scattered by persecution, and they carried with them both the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the principles of Christian life and organization.

There may be some idealization here. St. Luke, or whoever wrote the *Acts*, was filled with a vision of the Catholic Church and may have described the infant Church at Jerusalem as it was pictured at a rather later time. There is some reason to doubt whether 'the Apostles' meant at first the twelve disciples to whose exclusive society no man dared join himself. Almost certainly the

difficulties which accompanied the admission of the Gentiles were greater and more persistent than the author of *Acts* would have us suppose. It would have been strange if the Jewish Christians had shared their privileges with men of other races without some hesitation, and devotion to the Law of Moses was too deeply ingrained in pious Jews to allow loyalty to Moses to be regarded as a matter of indifference. Probably there were not a few who regarded St. Paul as a renegade and a heretic.

The reconstruction of the history of the Church in the first century must be left to scholars, but the issue is not in doubt. The Church so developed and adapted its organization that in the second century all Christians could regard themselves as enjoying equal status in a single body, the body of Christ. Thus Christians at Rome wrote to their brethren at Corinth exhorting them to retain a sense of discipline and respect for the established order of the Church, and a little later the Christians of Asia used the settled ministry of their churches to do honour to the martyr Ignatius and minister to his needs.

The long controversy as to the exact form of early Christian organization has tended to blind us to a recognition of the greatness of the Church's achievement. The danger was obvious that as the new movement spread throughout the world it would crystallize into scattered communities living their own lives, facing their own difficulties, and rapidly diverging from one another in faith and morals. Something of the kind did occur, no doubt. There were for a time local churches in which the accepted teaching was such as later orthodoxy would have repudiated. Alexandria is perhaps a case in point, for the suggestion that a veil has been drawn over the early history of that great church because the Alexandrian church of the second century was largely 'heretical' is one which deserves consideration. Late in the second century we find the church of Rhosus using the heretical Gospel of Peter and finding nothing objectionable in its teaching. Even in Rome aberrations were tolerated for a time, for Valentinus was a member of the church and the Shepherd of Hermas enjoyed a wide popularity. In such a matter as the observance of Easter the Asiatic churches remained out of step with other churches for many years. Yet on the whole the unity of the Church was maintained and congregationalism was kept in check.

There can be no doubt that the credit for this achievement belongs to the Christian ministry. In the first century an itinerant ministry of Apostles claimed and received recognition as exercising authority, and these visiting ministers accredited by the church at Jerusalem held undue local independence in check. St. Paul

was such an Apostle, and we see how vigorously he exercised his authority. Although he claimed that his apostleship was from Christ, yet he was none the less careful to tell the Galatians that the pillars of the Jerusalem church had approved his work. The New Testament mentions other apostles, and even false apostles, who were certainly not members of the Twelve. With the destruction of Jerusalem in A.D. 70 the situation must have changed, but there is no reason to think that the system of supervision was immediately abandoned. We still hear of visiting 'apostles' in the *Didache*, although the source of their authority is not made clear and the document supplies at least a hint that a local ministry was increasing in importance:

> 'Appoint for yourselves bishops and deacons worthy of the Lord, . . . for unto you they also perform the service of the prophets and teachers. Therefore despise them not, for they are your honourable men along with the prophets and teachers.'

We cannot be sure of the date of the *Didache*, but I can make no sense of it unless it belongs to the first century. In the second century the local ministers soon became supreme, and so rapidly did the historic ministry establish itself that Hegesippus in the middle of the century had no hesitation in compiling a list of Roman bishops from the days of Peter and Paul. He was certainly mistaken, but his confidence is evidence of the unquestioning acceptance of a monarchical episcopate throughout the world by A.D. 150.

The development was providential, for the bishops performed a great service to the Christian Church. They were the presidents of the local communities, leaders in times good and bad. They were the repositories of sound doctrine, handing on the *paradosis* which they themselves had received. As representatives of their flocks they corresponded with other bishops and thus delivered the local congregations from excessive parochialism. From the third century they attended councils and synods to discuss and decide matters of urgency, and so it was possible for the Church to maintain something like uniformity of doctrine and discipline. Moreover, from an early date the bishops of certain great sees acquired a measure of authority over smaller churches. A writer like Cyprian might produce an academic theory of the essential equality of all bishops, but the capital cities of the several provinces were obviously more important than little towns and villages, and it was inevitable that their bishops should acquire 'metropolitan authority.' By the time of Nicaea some, like Alexandria and Antioch, not to mention Rome, had attained to even wider authority, and the Church's organization was completed

by the recognition of the patriarchates specified at Chalcedon — Rome, Constantinople, Alexandria, Antioch and Jerusalem.

So in three or four centuries the Church developed an organization strong enough to unite its forces, to secure discipline, to discourage heresy, and to confront the State with an army which could fairly be compared with that of the Empire itself. That this was a powerful factor in promoting the spread of Christianity none can deny. Julian paid a compliment to the Church's system when he tried to imitate it by setting up his holy catholic pagan church.

It is less easy to describe and evaluate the growth of Christian doctrine. Few to-day would question the fact that Christian doctrine did develop. The theology of the earliest Church was simple, although it must not be forgotten that St. Paul belonged to the first generation, and simplicity was not the outstanding characteristic of his teaching. But St. Paul was unique, and it may be doubted how far his doctrine was accepted or indeed understood by his contemporaries. The primitive *kerygma* was established before the influence of St. Paul had had much effect, and its basis was the theology of Judaism. God was the creator and ruler of the world, Jesus was the Messiah, Lord, Son of God, appointed Saviour and Judge of makind. Soon Christ would return to wind up the present order and set up His kingdom. Meanwhile, He demanded repentance and faith, and those who accepted the Gospel and were baptized received the earnest of the Spirit. Such Jewish messianism was a powerful force among converted Jews and appealed to Gentiles too when they were assured that they might share in the glories of the coming kingdom; but by itself it could not have served a world religion, and again the hand of Providence may be seen in the swift development of the Church's faith. St. Paul, the writer to the Hebrews, and St. John were thinkers deeply convinced of the essential truth of the Christian message, but equipped with a wider culture and able to present Christian truth in the light of the best thought of their time. St. Paul was a Jew, but able to cast off the shackles of nationalism; the background of the author to the Hebrews was Hellenistic Judaism; 'St. John' was, as I believe, a Gentile, familiar with contemporary Judaism, a thinker, a mystic, and a modernist, who by his exposition of the *Logos* doctrine presented Christianity to the Greek world in a form which it could understand. These men we know, but no doubt there were many more who were able to relate Christianity to the thought and needs of their time. Some did it well and contributed to the growth of Catholic doctrine; some did it badly and were branded as heretics;

but all contributed to the gradual development of Christian doctrine. Thus Christianity spread because it met the spiritual and intellectual needs of the world.

We are often told that the religion of the Church differs widely from the religion of Jesus, and that the Church has presented to the world an amalgam of the religions of the ancient world. The primitive faith was Hellenized, supernaturalized, paganized, until catholic orthodoxy bore little resemblance to the religion of the early days. That is an exaggeration, but Modernists, who reject the notion of a faith, or at least a theology, once for all delivered to the saints, need not be disturbed. The strength of early Christianity lay largely in its flexibility. Had it remained static it could hardly have survived. Writers like Justin Martyr and the Alexandrian Fathers claimed that the Church had gathered all that was best in the thought of earlier times, welded it into one, and consecrated it to the service of Christ. Their claim was just. Whatever we may think of the final product, which was Chalcedonian orthodoxy, we can hardly blame the Church for seeking to make its own such partial anticipations of truth as philosophy could supply and expressing its fundamental convictions in terms which lay to hand. The system of orthodox doctrine evolved is not above criticism, but it has served the Church for fifteen hundred years, and it must surely be treated with respect if not devotion.

To-day many feel that orthodox theology is not entirely in harmony with modern thought. It was built up at a time when men had ideas of the nature of the universe and of the course of human history differing widely from our own, and it would be a miracle indeed if we could accept it without criticism or hesitation. The categories in which ancient formularies are expressed are not our categories, and their intellectual background is not ours. Yet just as there is continuity between the faith of the first century and the Chalcedonian Definition, so the faith of the Modern Churchman has grown out of the beliefs of the fourth and fifth centuries. Every generation has the right, and indeed the duty, to interpret its faith in its own terms, and just as the early Church spread because it met the intellectual needs of the ancient world, so the Church of the twentieth century must offer the same service to the world of to-day.

Let us pass to the third factor which promoted the growth of the early Church. The early Christians owed much to the efficiency of their organization, much to the wisdom of their theologians, but most to the constancy of the Church's rank and file. They were

not all saints, and the early days saw scandals not a few; but where in history can we find an achievement to equal that of the Church in the first four centuries? The corruption of the Graeco-Roman world may have been exaggerated by apologists. There were good and great men in pagan society, as Pelagius reminded Augustine. Virtuous family life was not unknown, and we must not suppose that the crazy viciousness of Nero's court was typical of the Empire, however useful it may be to the historical productions of Hollywood. Yet the fact remains that in the time of Christ heathenism was morally bankrupt, and the great cities were sinks of iniquity. It is said that ancient society had lost its nerve, but the truth is that it had failed to rise to its responsibilities in the moral sphere. Patriotism was dead, brutality was taken for granted, the relations of men and women were governed by the lowest standards, and religion itself was the source of manifold corruption. In such a world the Christians, though humble folk for the most part, stood committed to the exalted principles of the Gospel ethics, and their witness to the duty of following such principles was constant and uncompromising. The apologists of the second century had many arguments in defence of their position, but only one was unanswerable, their appeal to the moral superiority of the Christians over their heathen neighbours. Tertullian and Minucius Felix made the most of this, and a little later Dionysius of Alexandria wrote his famous account of the behaviour of the Christians of Alexandria during the great plague. It is worth quoting:

> 'The most of our brethren in their exceeding love and affection for the brotherhood were unsparing of themselves and clave to one another, visiting the sick without a thought as to the danger, assiduously ministering to them, tending them in Christ, and so most gladly departed this life along with them, being infected with the disease from others and willingly taking over their pains. In this manner the best of our brethren departed this life. . . . The conduct of the heathen was the exact opposite. Even those who were in the first stages of the disease they thrust away and fled from their dearest. They would even cast them in the roads half dead, and treat the unburied corpses as vile refuse, in their attempts to avoid the spreading and contagion of the plague.'

Against such witness the critics of the Church could only bring the scandals alleged against the Christians, and although they served well enough for a time, as the Christians multiplied and became better known the evidence for such charges was recognized as flimsy. Proletarian mobs are seldom rational, and *Christiani ad leonem* remained a popular cry; but even among those who enjoyed the scenes of the amphitheatre there must have been many who found it difficult to see in the martyrs, facing

death with calm and joyous determination, the legendary criminals who met in secret to practise murder and incest. Magistrates like Pliny, who took their duties seriously and tried to discover the truth, could find nothing worse than 'unbending perversity,' and they were frankly puzzled. By the third century the Christians had won the respect of their neighbours, who often shielded them against the persecuting policy of the State.

Here, then, was the greatest factor in the development and expansion of the early Church. The Christians had their faults; they sometimes gave needless offence to the heathen; they treasured some beliefs which were crude and superstitious; they quarrelled among themselves over matters of secondary importance, just as we do to-day; but they exhibited a new quality in their lives, a new moral energy, which provoked first resentment, then astonishment, and finally respect and admiration.

How does all this concern the Church to-day? It has been said that Church History is a tonic for drooping spirits, and if we mean by Church History the record of the early days the claim may be granted. History tells of mistakes which may be avoided, and of triumphs which can be renewed. The three factors on which I have dwelt are still relevant in the life of the Church. Its organization, its teaching, and its moral witness may all be made to serve the needs of the twentieth century, though many problems confront us. As to order, the outward unity of the early days is no longer a reality, and the problem of its recovery is intractable. Yet we cannot abandon the ideal. It is not enough to say, with Bacon, 'they be two things, unity and uniformity.' That a sense of fundamental unity has grown and is growing is a fact for which we must all be thankful; but our unhappy divisions remain, and they are a source of weakness and sometimes of scandal. Two courses seem possible. We may aim at forming a new inclusive Church in which the ideals and practices of the separated bodies may find expression, or we may hope that the branches may be regrafted into the old stock and full catholic order restored.

This is not the place to debate these alternatives. As practical policies the one can more easily be pursued than the other, and probably most of us here think that the spirit of toleration is the only spirit which promises progress. But a historian can sympathize with those who feel that no present advantage must be allowed to endanger the Church's catholic heritage, and the idea of a vast amorphous body of persons vaguely sympathetic towards Christian ideals does not suggest the Church militant in any effective sense. The attempt to claim apostolic authority for the

historic ministry certainly fails, but there is no denying either the early establishment of the episcopal system or its great value in furthering the progress of Christianity in the world. Episcopacy furnishes a guarantee that some sort of discipline will be maintained in the Church, some standard of right teaching respected, and some common policy pursued. History shows how much is lost when episcopacy is abandoned.

The problem of the Church's teaching is even more difficult. Continuity is clearly desirable, and unanimity is the ideal; but in the climate of the twentieth century the former is difficult and the latter impossible to achieve. The Modernist movement demands loyalty to truth rather than to tradition, and it suspects that from the point of view of true religion the importance of many accepted beliefs has been exaggerated. Yet we must recognize the danger of impatience, and challenge the assumption that radicalism is the only respectable manifestation of the liberal spirit. It will take the Church many years to assimilate the new knowledge which scientists and historians have revealed, and digestion is a process which cannot be hurried. Honesty is required, but so is humility; the former to preserve an open mind, and the latter to remind us that we may sometimes be mistaken. We need to pray for the guidance of the Holy Spirit to enable us to present to the modern world the essentials of faith in terms which do not offend the best thought of our own generation.

Meanwhile, the same obligation rests upon us as was so finely discharged by the early Christians, to convince the world that the secret of living lies with the Christian Church. We have our enemies, foes more formidable than the Roman Empire; but we have our friends also, and at least among the Western nations men are now more inclined to consider the Christian case sympathetically than they have been for generations. We must put first things first. Organization, doctrine, and worship, however important, are secondary; it is by its moral achievements that the Church will extend its frontiers. 'Not upon mind,' said Charles Kingsley, 'not upon mind, but upon morals is human welfare founded.' The same is true of the welfare of the Church.

JESUS AND THE CHURCH

By T. J. Wood, M.A., B.D.

THE title of this paper is ambiguous. It might be taken to mean either *What was the Church in the mind of Jesus?* or *What was Jesus in the mind of the Church?* I have been asked to deal with this latter interpretation of the subject. Even so, the subject is sufficiently comprehensive, and leaves out very little of Church history and doctrine. Behind this apparently simple title lies a whole mass of questions, including such as these: What was the historic Jesus to His disciples? How did the early Church come to express its interpretation of Jesus? How did this interpretation develop in the Church, and how far was this development justified? How far is the significance of Christ, as expressed in the Church's formularies and doctrines, valid for to-day? What is the significance of Christ for the Church to-day, and how can He be presented so that men will be drawn to love and follow Him?

Our subject, therefore, leads us into the whole field of New Testament exegesis, Christology, Christian experience, and the modern task of evangelism. There is hardly need to apologize for a very sketchy and imperfect treatment of so vast a subject. I have in mind, too, the kind of hearer and reader who is typified in the writer who made the following comment on a Conference which he attended:

> 'In general,' he said, 'the papers were far too intellectual for me, too highbrow, too erudite and calculated to give me spiritual and mental indigestion. They were too academic, too much the views of scholars who were not concerned with the religious experience of the masses.'

This is severe criticism and made me determine to be simple. I hope that in doing so I shall not open myself to the charge of misrepresenting, still less of falsifying, the issues. But I believe that the muddy waters of controversy have confused and beclouded the Christological problem quite unnecessarily, and that the Creeds, instead of giving the plain man the answer to the question, 'What am I to think of Jesus?' have left him in complete bewilderment. He is offered what to him are theological stones, when what he needs is the bread of life.

Christology (*i.e.* what the Church thinks of Jesus) has been the battlefield of countless sects and factions through the whole of the history of the Christian Church. It has rent the Church asunder, and produced the bitterest of persecutions. The hatred which has been stirred up by, and the murders which have been committed in controversies about the Person of Christ and the Sacrament of

Unity ought to bring home to Christians to-day the fact that charity is above orthodoxy, and that fellowship in the spirit of Christ is more important than doctrinal agreement. The fanaticism with which some Christian people defend Christian orthodoxy does far more harm to the Body of Christ than vagaries of opinion on matters which are indeed incapable of accurate definition.

The questions involved in the attempts to define the Person of Christ are, I believe, quite simple and capable of being explained in simple terms. The theologian is apt to make the doctrine so complicated and unintelligible that he finally takes refuge in the assertion that it is a profound mystery which the human intelligence can never fathom. That may be so; ultimately, everything ends in mystery, but at least we have the right to go as far as our intelligence can take us, and admit that when that limit has been reached the rest is mystery. But then the Church must acknowledge that at that point the subject ceases to be one for definition, and that beyond it there must be room for difference of opinion. The trouble is that the belief in the infallibility of the Church and the inerrancy of its doctrines has led to the attempt to define the indefinable, and the demand that the guesses of theologians in the realm of the unknown shall be exalted into articles of the Christian Faith and obligatory upon members of the Church.

I believe that the attempts of the Church to state its Christological doctrines were determined by a number of quite simple factors which are quite within the comprehension of the ordinary man, and that in the end the Church found the question incapable of solution and left it so. But theologians were not content with that state of affairs. They have persistently argued that, in order to make a theory of Incarnation intelligible, God must be a particular kind of God, expressed in the doctrine of the Trinity. With this doctrine in their hands they have then turned back to the idea of Incarnation and asserted that, since God is like that, then the Incarnate Son of God must be thus and thus. The human Jesus, therefore, must have been this particular kind of man. So, instead of sitting down calmly before the facts and trying to understand them, they start from their doctrines and try to make the facts fit in with them. In short they say, 'These are the hypotheses upon which I base my facts.'

Lest I should be thought to be inventing this explanation, let me quote the following sentence from Dr. E. L. Mascall's *Christ, the Christian and the Church* (p. 15). Speaking of modern Christologies, he says:

> 'They take as their starting point human nature as it is known to us, and then in effect inquire what must happen to the divine word if

> he is to be compressed within its limits; they hardly ever start by considering the mode of existence of the divine Word and then ask what must happen to human nature if it is to be united to him.'

Dr. Mascall ignores the fact that the doctrine of the Trinity was brought in in order to give rationality to the belief of the early Church that somehow God had revealed Himself through Jesus. The doctrine is based upon the facts, not the facts upon the doctrine.

It is this method of approaching the problem from the wrong end that gives the modernist (who is usually far more orthodox than the traditionalist) such a shock when it finds expression in popular literature like that of Miss Dorothy Sayers, e.g. *The Greatest Drama ever Staged*, 'God was executed' (p. 14); 'the man we hanged was God Almighty' (p. 16).

Dr. C. E. Raven said in a recent broadcast address:

> 'The liberals of twenty-five years ago asked questions which no Christian can properly evade. . . . They asked the right questions; they did not get the right answers. The questions must be asked again; and to-day the answers will be different.'[1]

Among the many questions which have been asked at these Conferences none have been more important than those which were asked at the Girton Conference of 1921 on '*Christ and the Creeds*.' The Doctrinal Commission was the outcome of that Conference, and we must acknowledge that the reply made in the Report of the Commission[2] goes some way towards answering the questions raised at Girton. The statements therein made on the Person of Christ are of unimpeachable orthodoxy naturally, and their acceptance by the Church of England as the standard definition of Christology would go far to save us from the distortions of the doctrine which are current in the Church of England to-day. The modernist interpretation is there given abundant justification. It is no wonder that Convocation has never had the courage to endorse the Report nor the temerity to disavow it.

Let us then take up the question, What is Jesus to the Church?

St. Mark tells us that when Jesus asked his disciples, 'Who say ye that I am? Peter answereth and saith unto him, Thou art the Christ' (*Mk.* viii, 29). St. Matthew adds the words, 'the Son of the living God.' St. Luke says, 'The Christ of God.' Jesus then went on to speak of himself as the Son of Man. The phrases used are charged with meaning, so that already by the time the Gospels have been written fact and interpretation have become inextricably mixed. This is the insuperable difficulty. It has enabled modern

[1] *The Listener*, 8th March, p. 378.
[2] *Doctrine in the Church of England.*

scholars to dismiss the attempt of former scholars to discover the Jesus of History as out-of-date and unattainable. Such a Jesus, as for example Harnack looked for, is the creation of the Liberal Protestant and the reflection of his own image. The *datum* from which the Church starts, and from which there is no appeal, is the Christ of the early Church. Thus the modern conservative thinks that he can retire behind his defences and remain secure in the whole armour of the Catholic Church.

But the problem is not so easily solved, for modern criticism has undermined those defences. Orthodoxy has regarded itself as impregnable because it has founded itself upon the rock of scripture. So long as the words of the Bible were regarded as the words of God, and their authority accepted as final and infallible, the evolution of Christian doctrine was merely the determination of the meaning of the verbal text. Doctrines were fashioned by piecing together the relevant texts (a very queer collection sometimes) until they made some kind of a picture. That was the way in which the Christological definition was worked out.

But directly the belief in the inerrancy of Scripture was abandoned this method became untenable (though it still underlies the methods of most modern theologians), and the results became necessarily subject to re-examination and re-interpretation. For example, some of the most important texts in Christology come from the Fourth Gospel, two in particular: 'I and the Father are one,' and 'The Father is greater than I' (*John* x, 30; xiv, 28). While these were taken as the *ipsissima verba* of Jesus their authority was final, and Christological controversy largely concerned with their correlation in some consistent dogma. But when modern scholarship came to the opinion (as it has done) that the speeches in the Fourth Gospel can no longer be regarded as the authentic words of Jesus, but are rather a meditation on Christian experience by a disciple at the end of the first century (or later), then these texts can no longer be accepted as decisive in the determination of doctrine. This is well known to theologians, but recognition is not given to the problem thus raised.

The words of the New Testament cannot therefore be taken 'in the true, usual, literal meaning,' for behind the terms used lie thought-forms which need to be known and understood before the meaning can be elucidated. Our modern semantists have taught us to be careful in our examination of the meaning of the words we use, and not lightly to fling them about as though their interpretation were clear and unquestioned. How many Christian people, for example, pause to consider what they really mean by the expression 'Son of God'? It is used as though everybody would

understand its meaning at once. Yet it is the most difficult form of words used in religion. It obviously cannot be taken literally; it is a metaphor, and leaves us with the question as to what qualities of human sonship are to be taken as symbolical of the relation between God and Jesus. The dangers of applying human analogies to divine things are nowhere more evident than in the use made of this simplest, most attractive, yet most difficult expression.

The search for the Jesus of History is not to be abandoned, for since it is acknowledged that by the time the New Testament books came to be written (even as early as the earliest Epistle of St. Paul, long before any Gospels were in existence) historical fact had become overlaid with interpretation. Hence, the conservative critic is still faced with the problem of what was the fact that was so interpreted, and was the interpretation justified? We do not want to be landed with a shadowy, unreal Jesus like a lay-figure clad with the trappings of contemporary thought-forms. Men and women require a real man whom they can love and serve, not an ecclesiastical synthesis.

The interpretation of Jesus by the early Church depended roughly upon three factors. These were:

(1) The Jewish Messianic hope;
(2) The background of Jewish thought, which includes not only the Old Testament, but also the Wisdom and Apocalyptic Literature;
(3) The Greek philosophy which provided the thought-forms of Christian theologians for several centuries.

It is impossible for us to recapture the experience of Jesus which was shared by the disciples. That it was something startling and overwhelming is clear from its consequences in their lives and in the experiences of the early Church. What that experience was they did their best to record in the books which we call the New Testament, but these were compiled some years after the events which they record, and in the interval the tradition had hardened (by its constant repetition) and its shape had already been determined by the pre-existent ideas and beliefs of the disciples. How far those ideas and beliefs had been shared by Jesus is one of the most difficult questions to answer, for we cannot say how much they 'read back' into the original events and sayings under the influence of later ideas.

There is no doubt that the earliest interpretation of their Master which came to their minds was that of the Messiah. Much has been learned in recent years about Messianic ideas and books, but it is impossible to know how much of the information now accessible to

us was present in the minds of the early disciples. That Jesus was the Messiah was the theme of the earliest preaching, and would therefore be the immediate subject of controversy with the Jews. In the course of that controversy ideas would be developed and Old Testament passages brought into prominence to lend support to the Christian argument, which would tend to become stereotyped. It is possible that Saul was already familiar with this argument and the methods of presenting it before his conversion, and it may have been the means by which he was converted, for we read that immediately after his conversion he 'confounded the Jews which dwelt at Damascus, proving that this is the Christ' (*Acts* ix, 22). He would hardly have been able to do so unless he had already studied the Scripture argument.

Yet the signs of this controversy in the Creeds are exiguous. It has been said that the disciples realized that only one-half of the Messianic prophecies could be claimed to have been fulfilled by Jesus here on earth. One set of prophecies, for example, relating to the coming of the Son of Man on the clouds of heaven had not been fulfilled. 'Your Messiah,' the Jews could say, 'died upon a cross.' To which the Christians retorted, 'Yes; but one day he will come again, and then he will come on the clouds of heaven, and all his angels with him.' That day they believed was not far distant. The vestiges of Messianism in the Creeds therefore are few ('. . . and ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of the Father; and he shall come again with glory to judge both the quick and the dead; whose kingdom shall have no end.'), and they do not enter into the discussion of the Person of Christ as it developed down the centuries.

It was from the second stream of ideas that Christology developed. The Messianic argument would not carry much weight in a Gentile environment, and as the Gospel was carried out into the Gentile world a new method of presentation would come into being, and a fresh method of approach be adopted. The line of argument was derived from the Wisdom literature which had arisen in the Judaic-Hellenic environment of the Jewish settlements of the Diaspora, notably Alexandria. Jewish thinkers, desiring to reconcile their ancient religion with the modern culture of Greek philosophy, had identified the Logos of Greek philosophy with the Wisdom of the Lord of Jewish thought.

The great development in Christian doctrine was when some early Christian found the way of reconciling Hellenism, Judaism and Christianity in one full sweeping tide of spiritual interpretation. He proclaimed that the Logos of Greek philosophy, identified with the Wisdom of the Lord of Judaism, had been fully

revealed in Jesus Christ. This flash of inspiration enabled the Christian missionary to shake himself from the limitations of Jewish Messianism and transform what might otherwise have remained merely a variation of Jewish national religion into a world-wide Gospel of revelation and redemption. When, where, and by whom this was done we do not know. It was commonly supposed that it was the work of the author of the Fourth Gospel, on account of his use of the idea in his first chapter, but it is clear that this interpretation dates back to a much earlier date. Indeed, it is much more tempting to believe that the originator of the Wisdom-Logos interpretation of Jesus was St. Paul, who used it in the *Epistle to the Colossians* (assuming that Epistle to be his). In I *Corinthians* (i, 24) St. Paul speaks of Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God, to them that are called, both Jews and Greeks.

Whoever it was who first made this identification, it opened the door to a new and fruitful method of interpretation. Rendel Harris has shown that the Prologue to St. John's Gospel can be paralleled from Wisdom literature, proving that the attributes of Wisdom were transferred to Jesus, or rather to the Wisdom or Logos now regarded as dwelling in Jesus. The most important of these attributes was the association of Wisdom with God in the creation of the world (*Prov.* viii, 22-31), which is found in *Colossians* (i, 16-17), *John* (i, 10), and in the phrase in the Nicene Creed, 'by whom all things were made.' The texts dealing with Wisdom easily led to the idea of Incarnation, for Wisdom is described as dwelling with men in many passages.

Prov. viii, 31. And my delight was with the sons of men.
Wis. vii, 24. Penetrating through all spirits.
27. And from generation to generation passing into holy souls She maketh men friends of God and prophets.
x, 16. She entered into the soul of a servant of the Lord.
Ecclus. i, 10. She is with all flesh according to his (God's) gift.

It was then an easy transition to think of this Wisdom, or Word of God, who was capable of dwelling in holy souls and making men friends of God and prophets, as being supremely dwelling in Jesus, but the manner of the in-dwelling is not explained in the New Testament. It is asserted boldly, as though no longer needing explanation, in *John* (i, 14):

> 'And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, glory as of the only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth.'

So the doctrine of the Incarnation was put forth, but the Church had still to expound and explain what she meant.

The scene was set. The day of direct experience had passed (though I have known Christ after the flesh, now know I him so no

more, says St. Paul). The day of the text had arrived. The authority in the discussion was the book. So far as we can see (and this is important) no new information could or can ever emerge concerning the experience which the disciples had of the historic Jesus or the manner in which they interpreted that experience. Fresh information as to the background of the ideas may emerge, and indeed has emerged, but the material out of which any doctrine of the Person of Christ must be developed is there, in the New Testament. The Early Church did not have access to any secret information, and the Church to-day is just as free to develop its theories of the Incarnation in accordance with modern ideas of God and of human personality as was the early Church to develop its ideas according to the ways of thought of its time.

Actually the early Church laboured under a great disadvantage in developing a doctrine of the Incarnation on account of the third factor to which I referred, namely, the current Greek philosophy. For they were handicapped by the view that God was remote from the world and was incapable of suffering, a view still to be found in our first Article (. . . God . . . without body, parts, or passions . . . .). They did not see that this view of God was quite irreconcilable with a belief in a God of Love, and indeed made any doctrine of a real Incarnation impossible. This limitation begets a great many heresies, and orthodoxy itself, and its abandonment (and it must be abandoned) requires a re-shaping of the Christological problem.

The doctrine of the Incarnation had therefore to be developed within the framework of current ideas of human personality, and it is here that the greatest difference between the early Church and to-day comes into play. For it is no longer possible to regard a man as a series of layers of existence, body, animal soul, spirit, principle of individuation (or core of personality, as some say), or as a bundle of faculties, mind, will, and so on. Still less can we speak of God in terms of 'substance,' or 'nature.' In short, the doctrine of the Incarnation was worked out in terms that are irrelevant to our modern thought. As the Doctrinal Report says: 'We wish to assert that the Church is in no way bound to the metaphysic or the psychology which lie behind the terms employed by the Council (of Chalcedon)' (p. 81).

Ultimately the Church worked out a solution to the problem which appeared to end the discussion, namely, the Chalcedonian Definition, which asserted that Christ existed in two natures, the property of each nature being preserved in one person and one hypostasis. It is easy to see that this is no solution at all. It merely repeats the problem; it does not solve it. It appears to attach two

'natures,' human and divine, to one person, who seems to exist without 'nature.' This is meaningless, and is indeed ruled out because, according to the orthodox view of God, God's nature and person cannot be separated. The Being of God acts as a whole and not in parts. This means that the whole of God became 'the core of personality' of a human being, Jesus. No wonder that orthodox Christians believed that they were justified in thinking that Jesus was conscious all his lifetime that he was God, that he possessed omniscience and omnipotence. Such a being cannot be said to be a man at all, or to be consistent with the historic Jesus. This is the view of Jesus which I quoted from Miss Dorothy Sayers and which seems so shocking to a liberal, as it did to the School of Antioch.

The Chalcedonian Definition is not a definition; it merely sets a fence within which any doctrine of the Person of Christ which seeks to call itself Christian must move. The limits are that the doctrine must not deny the full humanity of Jesus nor the full divinity of the revelation of God given through him. How these two assertions can be reconciled the Definition does not say, and it is clear that there is no official doctrine in the Church which does define the method of reconciliation. New ideas of personality require necessarily new ways of solving the problem, one attempt at which has recently been made by the Dean of St. Paul's.

It is time therefore that the laity were relieved from the burden of being compelled to accept views of the Person of Christ which are incomprehensible and which in fact are heretical according to the Church's own formulae. It is most extraordinary that the World Council of Churches should have adopted as its test of membership a Christological formula (which it derived in the '80's from the American Y.M.C.A. !) which excludes the humanity of Christ and so is redolent of Monophysitism and Docetism. 'Jesus Christ as God and Saviour.' The Church needs to adjust this lack of balance in its teaching, and to insist upon the perfect humanity of Jesus, which in modern parlance means that Jesus was *a* man. It must recognize, too, that there is no official theory of the Incarnation, and that people may accept any theory which does not explicitly deny either the reality of the manhood or the reality of the divinity. As the Doctrinal Report says:

> 'The fullness of the Divine life revealed in Christ cannot be adequately expressed in human language, and theoretical statements share the limitations of all theoretical formulae.' p. 79.

Probably no one would have been more surprised than St. Paul or St. John to learn that the pictures, which they threw off in the heat of the moment and used to enrich their sense of the wonder

of the divine glory which they had seen in the face of Jesus Christ, had been converted into the rigid framework of a dogmatic theological system. They were living in the dynamic power of a new experience. The reality of their faith was not to be found in doctrinal formulae, but in the recreation of human personalities. 'If any man be in Christ there is a new creation.' It is this re-created life and power that the Church needs and to which the world will respond. Let the Church allow the Spirit of God to flow through it and express itself in new ways of worship, new ways of Christian thinking, and above all in new ways of Christian fellowship, and of Christian living. Then would men again see Christ as the Power of God and the Wisdom of God claiming Lordship over mind and life.

THE CHURCH AND PUBLIC EDUCATION

By Canon M. T. Dunlop, Director of Religious Education in the Diocese of Manchester

THIS country has never had a system of education. There has been no central control, no prescribed curriculum. Englishmen have not conceived of such possibilities because they have not felt such needs. They have been considerably concerned to educate children and selected young people, but little with educational theory or organization. They have pictured education, quite simply, as the job of the teacher. Our educational reformers, a rôle only recently become fashionable, have primarily endeavoured, as most of them still do, to assist the teacher in his task. The focus has been on the teacher, not on what is now called 'the content of education,' still less on administration. The broad decision of our Church these days to concentrate its financial help on Teachers' Training Colleges is in line with this practical approach.

In its lack of system British educational practice is in contrast with that of most other countries, and the historical reasons for this are, of course, many and far-reaching: education must reflect at least as much as it may shape the society it serves. The growth of our education has been gradual and relatively undisturbed, so that at no particular time has an urgent need appeared to erect a system, until now, when the rate of growth has been abruptly accelerated. Again, our schools and colleges have been independent establishments and general administration of them impossible and unnecessary. Even when schools began to be provided

for the whole of a rapidly expanding population, these were still independent, the Charity Schools of the eighteenth century and the Anglican and Free Church Schools of the nineteenth. After Waterloo, and Peterloo, the State entered the field, urged on by such men as Cobbett and Bentham, Carlyle, J. S. Mill, Dickens and the two Arnolds. But from 1833 to the 1860s the State acted only through grants-in-aid; and when at last it developed its own educational department of the Privy Council its own schools were built and maintained for long by Local Boards financed by rates and grants. The fact is that we have had no system of State education because from the Revolution onwards we did not seriously conceive of the State as set up to do much more than defend our rights and exact other men's duties at home and abroad. We have had little theory of education because we have had little theory of the State. With the beheading of Charles and the acquittal of the seven bishops we had thought to put the Platonic and propagandist State out of business for good. When compelled, largely for reasons of hygiene, to establish local centres of government, we evolved from the pages of the Poor Law an unique institution, the English Local Authority, which is strictly a mere statutory hypostatization of a congeries of independent social services. Thus did we reconcile universal sanitation with the Whig principles of the Revolution. Elementary education remained for some time the business of its Local Boards. The cause and the effect of our method have been sharp inequality and extreme freedom, with experiment as normal. The freedom has been open to abuse by idiosyncracy and greed and we recognize now the need for oversight by comparatively disinterested public authority, but our method has met each demand made by a changing society, and it has been progressive. It may be wondered whether, say in ten years time, when all schools are finally typed, it will be possible under the eyes of a benevolent inspectorate for a Dickens to introduce a Froebel, for Mr. and Mrs. Elmhurst to venture a Dartington Hall, or an Arnold of Rugby.

Most importantly, for centuries our educational institutions, from universities to elementary schools, were founded and maintained by Christians for Christian purposes. There is, I suggest, a theory of education proper to Christianity that militates against systemization, and to this I briefly return at the close of this paper. A Christian education, however, does not in itself rule out centralization, though it must determine its character. Norway, that enlightened and courageous country, has a central system, although the Minister for Education is also the Minister for

Church Affairs and ninety per cent. of the people belong to the Norwegian Church. We should hesitate to identify liberty with the forms of it familiar to us. In England a national system has been precluded because the bias of Christian education towards variety and freedom has been immensely reinforced by the character of the English Church. That Church has been predominantly parochial and only feebly and reluctantly central. It has also been as much the Church of the laity as of the clergy; individual laymen, founding Christian colleges and schools, did not have to seek 'planning permission' from the Church, which indeed had no plan, though they usually recognized what they held to be the place of a bishop by inviting him to be the Visitor.

Moreover, just as the Anglican Church was designed to be a national Church and yet also to continue the Catholic tradition, so was it most subtly contrived, while serving as a national Church, to safeguard the rights of the individual judgment and of the congregation. Hence it was hard for Anglican authority to put a good face upon the condemnation of Nonconformity. The Acts of Occasional Conformity epitomized a perpetual dilemma and an indigenous sectarianism flourished. The contribution of Nonconformity to our political freedom has long been acknowledged; its contribution to our educational freedom has been as valuable. The British and Foreign Schools Society preceded the formation of the Anglican National Society by three years. Nor were Nonconformist schools always founded in isolation from the Church of England, and rarely in competition with her. In the Diocese of Manchester there is a parish school whose official title is Littleborough Hollingworth Free Church Church of England School; and there are others like it where the incumbent is Chairman of the Managers and the Trust Deeds rule out exclusive use of any one denominational teaching. The change in this co-operative temper came with the change in the complexion of the Church of England under the outlandish heat of Tractarianism. It was a tragedy for Christian education, and for education itself, that Tractarianism coincided with the recognition of the need for universal and compulsory schooling. The State, against its whole tradition and instinct, was forced into the position of Gallio and, perforce unable to take sides as between Nonconformity and a sectarian Anglicanism, sought retreat in the Cowper-Temple Clause. At the same time, we may regret that in these days the Methodist Church in the North is almost everywhere declining to seek Aided Status for its schools. There is no discharge from the war for independence, and in that war a few Aided Free Church Schools might have played a part out of all proportion to their number.

Therefore it is remarkable that the Act of 1944 makes an open move towards a system of education precisely in the field of religious instruction. A common 'Agreed Syllabus' is laid down for all County and Controlled Voluntary Schools. Each Education Authority draws up its own syllabus, but the principle of a system is there: the teacher is told what to teach. One reason for this unprecedented departure is that a great number of teachers to-day have little knowledge of the Bible and less of the Christian doctrine. The Protestant Churches have failed to teach Christianity to what is rapidly becoming an educated nation. An agreed syllabus for history or physics is still unthinkable. Yet the Agreed Syllabus for religion is itself only possible because these same teachers, in the world they know, desire to teach the Christian religion adequately. The second reason for this statutory curriculum is the divisions between the Churches. Once more the Emperor summons the Churchmen and tells them to resolve their squabbles and to declare the essentials of the faith that the people may be saved. Yet we can rejoice at the patient working of the Holy Spirit over the past hundred years, in which we may trust that Anglican Modernism has proved a useful instrument. It is, after all, now possible for a statutory authority to invite the denominations to help to make a syllabus in the assurance that there is a sufficient agreement amongst them on the essentials. We are a long way towards Reunion when the State deems it politically safe to replace the Cowper-Temple Clause by the Agreed Syllabus.

In speaking to the 1944 Bill in the House of Commons, Mr. Chuter Ede said that it was the wish of the great majority of the British people that their children should be taught the principles of the Christian religion. There are no more striking sections of the Act than those which require religious instruction to be given and which decree that 'the school day in every County School and in every Voluntary School shall begin with collective worship on the part of all the pupils.' We may be thankful for the wisdom of our rulers and the religious sense of our countrymen who, ignoring the acrimonies of disunion and the long resistance of the Churches to advances in history and science — errors that had offered every excuse for secularism—have thus quietly reaffirmed the intent of us all. Contrariwise, we may be thankful to the Churchmen of the last century who, however wrong-headedly, resisted the materialism which they sensed beneath the overwhelming arguments of a Huxley or a Herbert Spencer; and to those Anglican parishes which desperately clung to their Church Schools until now their major purpose is enshrined in an Act of

Parliament. The Christian intention of that Act has been endorsed by many teachers and educationists. A recent report issued by the Ministry emphasized that the Christian religion gave the one sure basis for a true education. Mr. Gould, the Secretary of the National Union of Teachers, has profoundly remarked that education can only begin where theology ends. How that Act shall work in practice will depend largely on ourselves: it offers the Churches an unparalleled opportunity to win the generality of our people for Christ.

There are many ways in which that opportunity might be taken; they have often been discussed, and we shall touch on them. But the contemporary educational scene suggests certain considerations that should weigh heavily with the Church in co-operating with public education, and we must look more closely at that scene. There is no time even to mention its excellent features: they constitute a comprehensive attempt to 'contribute to the spiritual, moral, mental and physical development of the community.' Tribute must also be paid to the friendly attitude of the Ministry of Education towards the Church, especially to her schools, which is as flexible, indeed as personal, as the Act allows; and as much is true for most Education Authorities, certainly for most in this writer's part of the world. Yet with the inner excellencies has come a profound change in the outer structure of education. From one angle, it can be summarized as a vast increase in the potential powers of the administrator; from another, as the abrupt emergence of pattern and uniformity; from another, as the growth of centralization. In these manifestations of a technological age there are the gravest dangers, not only for religious education, but also for education at large, and for our society. All the elements of a thoroughly regulated national system are with us for the first time in centuries.

The change of overriding significance is, patently, the disappearance of the negative State of the Revolution and its replacement by the modern State, active in provisioning, policing and succouring its citizens from cradle to grave. Indubitably, if every child is 'to receive efficient full-time education, suitable to his age, ability, and aptitude,' as he should, then the money must be found almost entirely by the State. Here, as elsewhere, the real question is how to combine a State economy with liberty. Meantime, the dangers are obvious. The political corollary to welfare from cradle to grave is propaganda from infancy to dotage. Today, in the green leaf of comparative success, the cornucopian State finds necessary the special pleading of Public Relations Officers and the redundant and significantly childish advertisements

of nationalized monopolies: what will be done in the dry of comparative failure? Political logic can be mitigated, even aborted, but only if we are determined on it. The present Ministry of Education would regard propaganda with horror; but it has the powers, given favourable conditions, to undertake it. At present it operates, of deliberate policy, almost entirely through Local Education Authorities: an unhappy proof is its refusal to create more Responsible Bodies for Further Education. But already the Ministry provides, on average, a sixty per cent. grant as against rates, and there lies the potentiality of control. Just because the Ministry's chosen vessels are popularly elected bodies a measure of control is essential for efficiency in so skilled an activity as education. Under the 1944 Act an Authority in appointing its Chief Education Officer must submit a short-list with case-histories to the Minister, who may prohibit a proposed appointment; and in every variety of section final power is reserved to the Minister.

Last year the Education Authorities spent over £237 millions. The size of their task necessitates some centralization; but it invites much more. The number of pupils has been about six millions for fifty years, yet centralization has only recently gathered momentum, and chiefly since the 1944 Act. Hundreds of relatively independent schools have been absorbed; thousands are due for absorption or disappearance, some eighteen hundred of them in villages alone. The reorganization of all but a few schools into fixed types, however desirable, with a uniform class-structure based on age, is a long step towards systemization, while entrance by examination only, however politically just, with a minimum age for the last examination, is an even longer one. Moreover, the range of statutory education has been much extended. Ancillary services have been enlarged or created. The fields first cultivated by voluntary societies, the organized promotion of youth work, adult education, amateur music, drama and the arts, have been largely taken over. It is significant that the Act gave the Authorities the option of grant-aiding the existing societies, which the Ministry encouraged, and that the option has been usually rejected or niggardly used. It was a minor calamity for liberty when the Ministry itself decided not to use the National or Regional Councils of Social Service for the administration of Community Centres, which Councils had invented the Centres and organized most of them at the time, but handed this also to Education Authorities, inexperienced as these were and, of their statutory nature, incapable of administering independent bodies. This withering of voluntary societies has gravely diminished the number of

self-governing groups, which form the humus of democracy, and increased the range, prestige and power of the Authorities. Public education is becoming an overgrown but still jealous monopoly and the very word 'education' distended to transparency. The consequence has been the multiplication of administrators: the headquarters alone of a large Authority may employ upwards of one hundred persons. Final control over this wide tract of education, from the Nursery Class to the Technical and Teachers' Colleges, rests with the Education Committee, devoted men and women, but elected for any reason except their educational qualifications and toeing a party line in most debates. Such concentration of power and business results in hesitations or rigidity, further augmenting administrative work. The chief administrators, usually men of competence and vision, are compelled in self-defence to aim at uniformity, to proliferate forms because these are generally applicable, and to seek a clear chain of command. It is ironical that totalitarian administration should first be taking shape in education. It is still a trend, but already well developed. Under the Ministry's Secondary School Code a headmaster, who may be a graduate, in allowing a member of his staff to attend a funeral, must complete a form for the County headquarters stating the name of the deceased and the date of interment. *The Times Educational Supplement* has described the powers of managers and governors under the Authorities as often illusory.

Centralization of administration has happened to coincide with the emergence of a misbegotten yet congruous view of education. Put bluntly, this would attempt to hold that equal opportunity means that all must have the same education, that none may have more education, or even learn faster, than all. In its modified form it insists upon selection for kinds of education by aptitude only. It is a bankrupt doctrine, an ignorant application of the principle of political equality to an inappropriate field. It is to think of education quantitatively; while the insistence on aptitude exclusively stems from materialism. Yet it is clear how easily such a view of education could provide the ideology or *mystique* for a closely organized and authoritarian system.

In religious teaching and worship a further process is at work. From the standpoint of the Church the alarming aspect of the 1944 Act and its application is not the consequences for Church Schools, though these are serious, but the establishment of what is potentially a theological authority and teaching order quite separate from the Church. The position can here be only crudely outlined. Attached to the Universities are Institutes of Education,

part of whose concern is the content of teaching. They are already turning attention to religious instruction. The Institutes operate through their constituent members, the Training Colleges, which they advise on syllabuses and methods. From the Colleges the great majority of teachers will derive their knowledge of Christian faith and history. Most of them will later teach in County Schools administered by Education Authorities responsible also for the forms of school worship. Finally, this teaching will be inspected by Inspectors of the Ministry or of the Authorities, themselves the products of the process that has engendered the presentation of Christianity being given. The 1944 Act, in its one retrograde section, pointedly nipped out the hopeful growth of interdenominational Church inspectorates for County Schools. The Church as an institution, as the spirit-bearing, worshipping community which carries deep in its heart the roots of the tradition that should perpetually flower anew for each generation, gears into this statutory organization of theology and teaching at only one point: in the groups of Training Colleges making up the Institutes there will be one or more Church Colleges, at least in England. True, the Churches together helped to draw up the Agreed Syllabuses, but that has been done, and religious authority cannot for long reside merely in a document, be it syllabus or creed. In any case, the ultimate influence of the Agreed Syllabus is much in doubt; it is inevitably overloaded and, as a prescribed syllabus, contrary to the disciplines of a good teacher. The Churches have a more continuing influence where an Authority has set up an Advisory Council on Religious Instruction, but these Councils are only permitted, not mandated, by the Act: many Authorities have not established them; others give them little say. Our Church has also her Aided Schools, but when all Development Plans are implemented, these are likely to be, relatively speaking, only a handful.

Doubtless this organized, statutory religious education has appeared because of the disunities of the Churches; and because of their failure to recreate their tradition so that, flowering again in the intellectual light of our own day, it might renew its intrinsic authority. The first report of the Ministry's Advisory Council declared that 'to many, the Christian beliefs which in the past supported our moral teaching no longer make sense. . . . To insist upon the beliefs appears an affront to the intellectual integrity of such men and women.' But the result remains most gravely dangerous. The teacher is a contemporary, and a professional, whose approach to children may be possessive, though benevolent, and perhaps sentimentally humanitarian. To-day he is too

often called upon to replace the lost influences of the home, the community and the Church. In his hands, in that impossible situation, Christianity is beginning to appear as a function of education, even as a means to the educational end. That way can only lead to the Platonic conditioning of men to a pattern preconceived by other men. As seriously, a secular Christianity, formulated, disseminated, and inspected by teachers in isolation from the authority of the Church, will escape heresy, will remain Christianity, only if it should become embodied itself in a new Church. Let us with sincerity pay tribute to those Churchmen who, by personal witness and professional influence, are bringing the inspiration and the corrective challenge of Christ to bear on our educational system, from the Institutes to the Infant Schools, but this is to live on our heritage and a happy accident. If we soberly look at our educational law and organization it is plain that any day we might awake to find the whole world gone heretical. Anglican Modernists, with their emphasis on reason, are perhaps more sensitive to heresy and its dire consequences for action than the average pragmatic Englishman: we should be foremost in safeguarding for this age that living orthodoxy which alone can save it.

Again these are trends, but one Authority has written to parents offering them the option of some Church teaching in Controlled Schools, and reminding them that the Authority, which provides the Agreed Syllabus, now pays the whole cost of the school. This Encyclical of the new papacy might be entitled '*Num* . . .,' expecting the answer, No. Another Authority forbids the parish clergyman to enter his Controlled School unless on the express invitation of the Head Teacher, and then only on educational grounds, when his visit must be entered in the school log like any other untoward incident. This same Authority, noting that there may be no denominational worship in a County establishment, and pursuing the logic of this to its barren end, has totally prohibited the celebration of the Holy Communion in any of its colleges; and this on a test case where the Principal and the local clergy would have welcomed a variety of rites and intercommunion. There is in sight the regimentation of teachers and pupils to the pattern of a State religion.

Such developments in education must be resisted, such tendencies reversed. Of late, strong voices have been raised in support of our traditional ways in the Ministry itself, and in the Universities, in the Association of Education Committees, and in the various teachers' organizations. But, inevitably, these usually reflect a partisan enthusiasm for the freedom of a section rather than concern for the liberty of all. The outlook would be brighter

if, for example, more Education Authorities were as anxious for the freedoms of the schools, the teachers, and the voluntary bodies as they are jealous of their own independence over against the Ministry. The Churches are the only organs in our country with the inherent independence, with both a vested and a general interest, and with the latent strength, to arrest the growth of a rigid national system of education and to preserve the liberty of the teacher, and so ultimately of the nation. The heaviest responsibility rests upon the Church of England, because of her tradition and her national place.

The first essential is to recognize the permanency of the modern State. It is useless harping on the past; nostalgia is inimical to the true function of tradition. Instead, our Church should quickly develop her own central powers. Do these come to reside in bishops or councils, they should indeed be constitutional, not sacerdotal. The rudiments of sane centralization already exist in the Church Assembly, the National Society, and elsewhere. Given ability to act effectively at the diocesan and national levels the Church should seek amendments to legislation at a few strategic points, and in her own field in the first place. For example, Advisory Councils on Religious Instruction, with real independence, should be made mandatory for the Authorities and for the Institutes of Education. The section of the Act dealing with Inspection should be revised. The option for Controlled or Aided Status might be renewed, under safeguards, since Development Plans will take years to implement, so giving all Managers the advantages of recent administrative easements. The Church herself might reconsider her tactics of concentrating her central educational moneys almost exclusively on Training Colleges: in the new situation independent schools are valuable strong points.

Meanwhile, the fullest use should be made of all co-operation which the Authorities and teachers are able and willing to accord, and the willingness is very widespread. Following the excellent lead being given by the Assembly's Central Council for Education, teachers' training courses ought to be promoted in every diocese. If teachers had the adequate training that they desire, the Agreed Syllabuses could be used simply as the compendious text-books which they are. Where there is an Advisory Council with real functions, great strides can be taken in elaborating and focusing the content of religious education, in method, in use of visual aids, in devising forms of worship, in drawing up or adopting school lectionaries and collections of prayers and hymns. In such an endeavour, with the help of teachers and educationists, the

Church might teach again the faith to England, and relearn it herself.

In the rural deaneries and parishes each opportunity should be seized of promoting self-governing groups, whether as organizations of the Church or of the voluntary societies. In the context of our time, the independence and democratic management of such groups are as important as any specifically Christian activity. They are the foundation stones of a free society and the only popular schools in which the elements of democratic leadership can be learnt.

But no effective resistance by the Church to the sombre developments in our education, and no wide advance in religious teaching, can be made except on two key conditions. The first is the reunion of the Protestant Churches. At every point where co-operation is offered by Authorities or teachers, the Churches are hamstrung by their divisions. Training courses in religious knowledge for County School teachers must obviously be inter-denominational; so the Churches seldom provide them. No elected public body will readily give facilities to one denomination and risk the reproaches of the others. Because of our Christian rivalries, our 'football-shirt religions,' public funds in a Christian country may not be used to promote the tenets of any denomination. Either none may have what all cannot take, or so much time is spent on computing the Lowest Common Multiple of distinctive and secondary beliefs, that the great truths commonly agreed on are almost overlooked. Yet Reunion should preserve these distinctive beliefs and the autonomy of the denominations or it may defeat our educational purpose by making only for more uniformity. There is required a public agreement on basic things, already adumbrated in the Lambeth Quadrilateral, followed at this stage by confederation. The outward signs need only be mutual recognition of ministries, inter-communion, and a consultative council. Given such a Reunion, the voice of the Churches in the present climate of educational opinion would be irresistible.

The second key condition is that the Churches shall come to terms with science, history, and theology itself, and declare the essentials of salvation. It is, we know, easy to say that reason shall reign; yet my reason may be another man's superstition. But it can be agreed that each man shall distinguish for himself between the basic and the secondary things; that each shall pursue an enquiry where it leads and openly accept the result or announce his agnosticism; that each tolerate the other man's opinions. On this basis in many places Anglo-Catholics, Evangelicals and Modernists are fruitfully working together and bearing brotherly witness to

a distracted world. From this first base, which is that of the Doctrinal Report, we can advance far in religious education. It was, therefore, that the Primate's condemnation of Dr. C. J. Wright was so saddening. Those Christian teachers, and I am one, who find the artistically lovely story of the Virgin Birth to be incredible, and as tending 'to mar the completeness of the belief that in the Incarnation God revealed Himself at every point in and through human nature,' were placed in a dilemma between the claims of reason and of an authority we would gladly acknowledge. One widely accepted result of an historical enquiry was declared illicit. A distinction was driven between a Christian teacher and other Christians in what they must believe, one contrary to the whole tenor of the Reformation and foreign to the New Testament. An attempt was made by authority to tell a teacher what to teach on grounds other than those of history and reason, on which both should stand. On any such terms co-operation with good teachers, whatever their private beliefs, becomes very difficult.

The heart of the matter is our view of God and of man: of God's self-revelation, of man's reason and conscience. The ultimate question of theology and of education is the nature of grace. The God we know in Christ does not only reveal Himself by lightning flashes in Barthian darkness; nor yet only in a self-sufficient corpus of stories and doctrines, the true interpretation of which is miraculously handed down through a closed succession of men, and which reason may only expound, never examine. There is the judgment of God, and there is the tradition of the Church; but these are significant for the knowledge of God only inasmuch as they are taken up into an act of faith, which is an act of the whole personality, in which the abstractions of reason and conscience are determinants. That act of faith, by its nature, is the individual's peculiar response to the unique self-revelation of God to him. It follows that, just as no man can save his brother, so no man can tell his brother what God is. The teacher can only — and how much it is — bear witness of God and, by telling of the history of the knowledge of Him, by reporting the tradition, and by exercising the reason of the pupil, prepare the way, trusting that the pupil may himself catch the spark of faith and nurse it himself into a steady flame. It is God who must speak, if there be God, and not the teacher. This humble rôle of the teacher as guide in religion will be found to be also his true and most effective rôle in every branch of knowledge and of art.

There is, therefore, a theory of education proper to Christianity. Negatively, it implies the incommunicability of truth; positively, proceeding from the character of the tested act of faith, it is able

to assert the validity of man's native reason and his capacity, as for his part, to arrive himself at truth, however imperfectly. Christian certainty in reason springs from Christian faith in God. Neither can a teacher inject the truth into his pupil, nor, equally, can the teacher be instructed what to teach. For all of us, teachers and pupils alike, must receive the truth for ourselves, and none of us has yet apprehended. Therein lies the immense liberating force of the Christian theory, which can correct and invigorate the entire range of education; it at once respects the freedom of the teacher and the integrity of the pupil. Should this theory prevail, it will precipitate its own appropriate administrative forms. In no other way may the Church so effectively resist the coming of a State system of education and the regimentation of the mind as by examining again the nature of the truth she herself holds and the manner of her holding it. The threats to English education are real, yet the position was never more hopeful. The good teacher and the wise administrator will recognize for their own a theory and practice of education which offer the disciplined liberty of a reasonable faith. Let the teaching Church, as a fellowship of men who press on that together they may apprehend more perfectly, have the courage of her faith in God and in reason. Let her go to her teaching task in the assurance that as God exists, men will hear His voice; that as reason reigns, men who sincerely seek the truth will find it, and find it to be one, the truth that makes them free.

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND AS SEEN BY A CONTINENTAL LAYMAN

By Professor Marcel Simon, University of Strasbourg

In Memoriam J. W. Hunkin

DR. Major has entitled one of his pamphlets on Anglicanism *The Church Nobody Knows*. If this phrase accurately describes the situation in this country, how much more so with regard to the Continent! In fact, there are probably but very few people across the Channel who have any clear idea of what the Church of England actually is. The largest part of my fellow-countrymen, and probably of the continental foreigners as well, are religiously uninterested. The average Frenchman, unless he is himself a Protestant, or lives among Protestants, hardly knows anything about Protestantism. How, then, could he be aware of the characteristics and originality of a Church he has no opportunity of getting to know? The Ecumenical movement, in bringing the non-Roman Churches closer together, has drawn the attention of continental Protestants to Anglicanism, which has become their partner, and often a leading one, in that field. But to the overwhelming majority of Catholics in France, whether practising or not, the Church of England does not mean very much. In their mind she is usually connected with, or even synonymous with, High Church. This is quite a common mistake, even among cultured people. I have recently learned from a book on Christian origins, much to my surprise, that the present Bishop of Birmingham belonged to '*l'aile moderniste de la Haute Eglise*,' the modernist wing of the High Church: a statement which would, I suppose, be energetically refuted by both Dr. Barnes himself and Dom Gregory Dix! 'High' in this instance just means, if anything at all, either 'episcopal' or 'established.' It is associated with the idea of hierarchy, with reference in one case to the Church's own organization, in the other to the privileged position she holds, as compared with the Free Churches, in the life of the nation and in relation to the Crown.

If I have the privilege of belonging to the small number of foreigners who really know something about the Church of England, this gives me neither right nor reason to boast. Nor shall I attempt to find out whether my interest in Anglicanism is due to mere accident or, as I am often inclined to think, is expressive of some mysterious affinity. I only want to emphasize that my witness is strictly individual. It is by no means an expression of continental opinion at large, nor even of the relatively cultured part

of that opinion. And I would also like to say that, whatever its causes, I reckon my contact with Anglicanism as one of the most interesting experiences in my life. For I consider your Church as one of the most attractive types of Christianity, the one which, as far as I can see, fits in best with my own conception of Christianity.

I became first interested in Anglicanism some twenty-five years ago, as an undergraduate. I was then — what I am no longer — a convinced and practising Catholic, and a member of a club of Catholic students in Paris. The conversations at Malines were at that time in progress. They had aroused in our small circle considerable enthusiasm and sympathy, all the more as Father Portal, at whose initiative the conversations had been started, had for some years been the chaplain of our group. We all hoped they would achieve a positive result. We thought of Anglo-Roman reunion as very likely, if only in the long run. It would bring back to our own communion a Church whose position, as represented by Lord Halifax or even Bishop Gore, seemed very close to our own; and it would also, in the expectation of the more 'liberal' among us, give the Roman Church, by constraining it to some concessions, a unique opportunity of self-reformation. Our hopes were soon deceived. The conversations ended in complete failure; and it could not have been otherwise. The whole attempt rested on complete misrepresentation of both Anglicanism, of which only the extreme right wing could possibly accept the Roman conditions for reunion, and Romanism, which can hardly make any substantial concession without denying its fundamental principles. The only positive result was to reveal to some at least of the Catholics that Anglicanism was not exactly what they believed it to be, namely, 'Catholicism without the Pope.' What then is it in fact, as seen by those continental eyes which, having acquired a sufficient knowledge of it, are able to estimate its originality among the various Christian Churches? In other words, what are the features of Anglicanism which appear most striking to a continental, and what kind of message is it able to convey to him?

What first strikes a continental observer is, I think, that the Anglican Church is a national Church. Some of you would probably call this in question. For the Church of England does not, in spite of its being the Established Church, gather within her fold all the citizens of this country: 'Anglican' and 'English,' although etymologically synonymous, have not, in fact, the same connotation. And on the other hand, the Anglican Communion, of which the Church of England is but one branch, extends far beyond the

borders of Britain. She exists on every continent, and includes people of many nations, races and cultures. The *Book of Common Prayer* is used in various languages. It can justly be vindicated by now that Anglicanism has thus really become an international branch of Christianity.

But the fact none the less remains that it is centred on England, that Canterbury is the mother Church, that the Primate of all England is at the same time, with regard to the heads of the other provinces, *primus inter pares*, and holds, to use the words of the 1948 Lambeth Report, 'a position of leadership' in the Anglican fellowship of Churches. The bulk of the faithful are English, or at least English speaking. And in the mission field the expansion of Anglicanism has for some time gone hand in hand with British colonial expansion, and still does so with the expansion of English culture: the centre of gravity of Anglicanism lies in the Anglo-Saxon world, in the British Commonwealth and the United States. 'The Church of England,' says Dean Inge, 'can justify its existence as English Christianity and in no other way' (*Outspoken Essays*, p. 108). And the Anglican communion at large could probably be described as English speaking or, if I may say so, English feeling or English influenced Christianity.

In none of the Christian Churches does this link between religion and nation appear as strong as here: neither in the Protestant Churches, whether Lutheran or Reformed, nor even in the Orthodox Churches of the East, which are indeed nationally organized but extend over a wide range of very different countries, and are, at least theoretically, all united in one body; still less in the Roman Church.

The Swedish Church, too, is an established Church whose life is even more closely linked than in this country with the life of the nation. But she is after all but one ramification of Lutheranism, which, though it counts the largest number of its faithful in Germany, is also strongly rooted in many other countries which are not exclusively of Teutonic culture. There are in France small congregations belonging to Churches — Methodists or Baptists, for instance — of British origin. There does not exist, so far, a French Anglican congregation. On the other hand, the Roman Church founds her claim to be the only true Church on the fact, amongst others, that she is present practically in every country of the world.

It could, of course, be objected that even Roman Catholicism, in spite of its universal character, has often assumed a national or even nationalistic *nuance*. France claims to be 'the first-born

daughter of the Church,' and Catholic missionaries have in many cases been the champions of French culture all over the world. There are very often, in the field of Catholic missions, rivalries between, say, French and Italian influences. But this very fact shows that it is not of the essence of Catholicism to be bound up with one single nationality. All the Popes have been Italian for centuries. But the possibility remains, and may become reality some day, of a Frenchman, a Spaniard or an American being elected to the See of Peter. Whereas it is difficult to imagine the Archbishop of Canterbury not being an Englishman.

All this would be quite normal if Anglicanism were no more, as asserted by the Anglo-Catholics, than just the English brand of Catholicism. Its situation would then be very much like the situation of Eastern Orthodoxy, which, according to the so-called 'branch theory,' is the Oriental variety of Catholicism. But the reality is quite different. In my opinion at least Anglicanism stands for much more than that. It represents an original and very valuable type of Christianity, not to be reduced to either Catholicism or Protestantism. And as such it should appeal to people even outside the British sphere of influence. And this is the reason why this unique convergence of religion and national culture is to a continental observer rather perplexing.

So is also another typical Anglican feature. The Anglican Church is a complex body and, if judged by the standards of logic, which are so highly appreciated in the land of Descartes, a rather queer one. And it is commonly admitted that she is so just because she is English. To quote Dean Inge once more, 'The Anglican Church is also characteristically English in its dislike for logic and intellectual consistency' (*op. cit.*, p. 107). History, together with national psychology, provide the explanation. The continental Reformation, Lutheran, Calvinist or Zwinglian, was achieved essentially by outstanding religious personalities. The English Reformation, on the contrary, as considered in its Anglican outcome, appears to me as primarily a collective business. The matrimonial difficulties of Henry VIII merely provided the occasion. And however important the part played by men like Cranmer, it is not to be compared with the creative rôle of Luther or Calvin. Is it exaggeration to assert that the real reformer here was not one single man, but the English nation itself, or at least a number of representative English, who were not in full agreement with each other in doctrinal matters, but whose common ideal was that of a type of Christianity adapted as perfectly as possible to the needs of the nation? The Calvinist Reformation was achieved, in its essentials, in one man's lifetime. Calvin

became a Protestant probably in 1533; when he died in 1564 his Church, which was really his work, was already strong and flourishing, in its final form, at Geneva; and his ideas were rapidly spreading all over Europe. Whereas it took several generations and the efforts of people largely different in outlook — the statesmanship of Elizabeth and the theological insight of Hooker — to shape Anglicanism. And it could perhaps even be said, without paradox, that it still is in the making.

Anglicanism, thus envisaged, was from the very beginning, and still is, if I am right, primarily a Church rather than one coherent and carefully worked out doctrinal system. As Dean Inge puts it: 'It began its separate career with a series of doubtless illogical compromises, in the belief that there is an underlying unity, though not uniformity, in the religion as well as in the character of the English people, which would be strong enough to hold a national Church together' (*op. cit.*, p. 108). It seems to me very significant that the true foundations and the very essence of Anglicanism are to be found in the *Book of Common Prayer* even more than in the Thirty-nine Articles. The emphasis is thus laid on common religious practice, not on mere theological speculation, in which there can consequently be great variations among the faithful.

I have no intention of giving intellectual support to the British Israelites. Nor do I think that the English character is identical with the Jewish character, but they have at least one feature in common: the primary importance assigned in religious matters to the practical and institutional rather than to the speculative. From the point of view of comparative religion there is, I think, in this respect a certain analogy between Anglicanism and ancient Judaism. Here, too, we have a religious body strongly linked up with a nation. Its fundamental unity rests on a minimum of formulated belief (it is hardly possible to speak of systematic dogma), and, chiefly, on common religious practice, worship of the one true God, observance of the same rites and Law, reverent study of the same Holy Scripture. This fundamental practical unity is strong enough to allow wide divergences, and even opposition, between Pharisees and Sadducees, Palestinian Jews and Hellenists, and, notwithstanding these divergences, still to hold them all together in one flock, which is God's own people.

'Unity, though not uniformity': it is very difficult for a continental, especially when he has been brought up under the combined rules of uncompromising Catholicism and Cartesian logic, not to confuse these concepts. To him, a Church which claims to

be, and is in fact both Catholic and reformed, traditionalist and progressive, whose right wing indignantly refuses to be labelled Protestant and could teach Catholicism to the Pope himself; whose left wing is proud of calling itself Evangelical and strongly supports the cause of intercommunion and reunion with the Nonconformists; who has not, at least so far, excommunicated her English Modernists; a Church

> 'Where broad and high and lowly
> All meet to disagree'

is indeed a puzzling body. But let him examine her more carefully, and he will probably come to the conclusion that, in spite of her being nationally bound, in spite of, or perhaps rather because of, what her adversaries call confusion and incoherence and which her friends call comprehensiveness, she has a message to proclaim which is of universal and essential value, to individuals as well as to the whole of Christendom, provided she remains faithful to what, in my eyes at least, is her own particular calling.

Anglicanism should, I think, if it were better known, awake a feeling of nostalgia among those French Catholics — if there are any left — who deplore the complete loss of the Gallican tradition. True, French Catholicism has, even nowadays, its peculiar *nuance*. This appears, if compared with Italian, Spanish, Anglo-Saxon Catholicism, as definitely progressive. Though no Catholic to-day, even the more enlightened, would call himself a Modernist, the spirit of Modernism has not died out completely. But the possibility of any original development is extremely limited. It is, for instance, well known that the recent Encyclical *Humani Generis* was directed mainly against the French Catholic *élite*, and against what some Roman circles would call 'the French heresies.' The triumph of ultramontanism and of Papal autocracy has in fact deprived France—and all the other Catholic countries as well—probably once for all, of every opportunity of achieving, on the line of its own genius, as against Roman uniformity, an ecclesiastical creation to be compared with the Church of England.

It is neither possible nor, in my opinion, desirable for one who has left the Roman Church to become completely new born. His religious sensibility as well as his mind have been modelled by his former education. There are some specifically Catholic values to which he is still clinging, and of which he carries with him the permanent need. He has a sense of tradition and religious continuity, a need of ceremonial and corporate worship, as expressed in a fixed liturgy, of sacramental life, of formal beauty; and he

needs the Church. All this, Protestantism, in so far as it is fundamentally individualistic, puritanic and, in the broadest acceptation of the word, iconoclastic, is unable really to satisfy. Anglicanism, on the contrary, if I trust my own experience, perfectly answers these aspirations.

What I here mean by Anglicanism is not by any means its extreme right wing, but just 'central' Anglicanism. With aggressive Anglo-Catholicism I cannot feel myself in real sympathy. Its liturgical particularities as well as its doctrinal assertions always appear to me as a rather servile transposition, not to say a parody, of Roman Catholicism, without any root in the authentic Anglican tradition. I heartily subscribe to the description which the great Catholic historian Duchesne gave of those people whose aim, he said, 'is to introduce into the Church of England all that I wish to eliminate from the Roman Catholic Church.' All this, I feel, is not Anglican. Once you have swallowed the whole of traditional Catholic doctrine and practice, you may accept Papal supremacy and infallibility as well, which can, after all, be considered as the logical completion of the whole system. And it certainly would not be worth-while leaving the Roman Church who, in spite of all her shortcomings and defects, in spite even of her dogmatic imperialism and intolerance, has none the less an undoubted greatness — what Cardinal Newman called *soliditas cathedrae Petri* — for what appears as just a pale shadow of it.

What genuine Anglicanism actually has to offer is something completely different. It is its Prayer Book, 'a joy for ever' to all those who are delighted in 'a thing of beauty,' formal and spiritual. It is, to quote, Dr. Garbett, 'the quiet and orderly reverence of its worship' (*The Claims of the Church of England*, p. 68), by which a continental observer, whatever his own religious education, cannot but be struck and deeply moved. And it is also, and above all, its doctrinal and liturgical comprehensiveness: this, Catholicism is unable to provide.

Here we go, indeed, definitely beyond Roman Catholicism and reach the very essence of Anglicanism, which, while upholding what was of permanent and universal value in the Catholic heritage, has at the same time been inspired by the spirit of both the Protestant Reformation and the Renaissance Humanism. Its real originality, as I see it, lies in the close association of elements which may, at first sight, appear contradictory, but which in fact are rather complementary. They are aspects of one and the same reality and truth which we as individuals, because of the one-sidedness of our personalities and of the limitations of the human mind, can only grasp in part. Nowhere does the Hegelian

conception of thesis, antithesis and synthesis find such a perfect application as in the Anglican Church.

The following statement made by George Tyrell, and quoted by Dr. Major (*The Church Nobody Knows*, p. 15), accurately describes the situation:

> 'The compatibility of freedom and authority, of science and revelation is surely a most essential and fundamental Catholic principle. Its application is the perennial problem. The Church which solves it first will sweep the world into its net. So far, without attempting a logical synthesis, the Church of England has always preached, ultimately, respect for tradition and respect of conscience (moral and intellectual) and it is perhaps she who seems most likely to win the race.'

The problem certainly is no easy one. Neither Roman Catholicism nor Protestant Liberalism in its classical form, as illustrated for instance by Harnack, have come to a satisfactory solution, for they both retain only one of the data. Anglicanism has, indeed, so far succeeded in combining them all. It has thus achieved a balance which, though certainly unstable, is of vital importance to maintain.

The Church of England runs the risk of losing herself whenever one of the fundamental principles underlying her different 'schools of thought' tends to outweigh the others and thus disturb the balance. To rule out one of her components, broad, high or low, or, alternatively, to let one develop out of proportion to the others, is to mutilate or distort her, and to reduce her to just an aberrant form of either orthodox or liberal Protestantism or Roman Catholicism. The synthesis, although it is no logical one, is not only of her very being: it *is* Anglicanism. And a permanent vigilance is required to keep things in balance, all the more as the danger of this equilibrium being broken does not always come from the same direction. It has sometimes, in the past, come from the Protestant party. It now definitely comes from the Catholic wing. I do not think the Church of England has ever been (as is often admitted by those Roman Catholics who know her intimately) in serious danger of becoming too 'broad.' Never, probably, has the indispensable Modernist counterpoise been so urgently needed as to-day, when the temptation of 'authority' and of dogmatic intolerance makes itself so strongly felt, in the Church of England as well as in other Christian bodies.

The task of Modernism, as I see it, is both negative—or rather defensive—and positive. It is to prevent the antagonistic Protestant and Catholic tendencies from dominating the Church and from going beyond certain limits which are not compatible with genuine Anglicanism. I think, for instance, of Protestant

fundamentalism, of 'advanced' Anglo-Catholic teaching on the Sacraments, and even of a certain sceptical liberalism. I here fully agree with Dr. James Parkes when, having stated that 'traditional Christianity belongs in its formulations to a world which has passed,' he perceives the urgent task of our time 'in the recovery of a new orthodoxy. I say "orthodoxy" because I am convinced that the reform movements, while quite inevitable and indeed valuable contributions, have not yet found the way forward. To substitute the noblest generalizations for a concrete belief and a concrete discipline is to substitute a candle for a searchlight' (*Judaism and Christianity*, London, 1948, p. 38). It is, I think, the positive task of Modernism to foster this 'new orthodoxy' and also to safeguard and promote in the true elaboration of it certain values and principles — reason, sound scholarship and criticism, right of personal judgment, relativity of doctrinal formulations — and a certain spirit, which is the spirit of Anglicanism, as expressed, for instance, in the recently reprinted and very remarkable Report on *Doctrine in the Church of England*.

It would indeed be a great pity, and even a tragedy, not only for the Church of England herself, but for the whole of Christendom, if, moved by what I cannot help considering as a kind of inferiority complex in face of Rome, she were to over-emphasize, with all its implications, the 'definite Catholic teaching' as the Anglo-Catholics understand it, and thus lose the unique position of *via media* she holds among the Christian Churches.

To this *via media* all ways seem to-day to converge. For example, the Roman Catholic is rediscovering the Bible, of which an amazing number of new French translations are being published just now. 'Back to the Bible' has become a very common watchword in these quarters. The approach to it is as liberal as it can be under the regulations of Rome: this is one of the few comforting features in the present evolution of Roman Catholicism. On the other hand, the Protestants are undoubtedly rediscovering the Church and the importance of the organic and corporate element in Christian life and worship. Both are thus achieving a more adequate understanding of their reciprocal position. And both look back to the early centuries of Christianity for a common pattern to be found: the development of studies in primitive Church history is certainly another significant trend in Christian scholarship to-day.

In Anglicanism the scriptural and the ecclesiastical elements balance each other. And it could, I think, be asserted that in various respects — as regards, for instance, the character of her episcopate — the Church of England is more like the ancient

Church than many other Christian denominations. This means that, in their mutual efforts to overcome their divisions, Christians of every origin must necessarily, sooner or later, meet the Church of England on their way, although she is rather too timid in making herself known abroad. For she has already achieved for herself, more or less satisfactorily, the synthesis — or shall we say the compromise? — which they in their turn are attempting.

It is, of course, very unlikely that all Christian denominations will some day be absorbed in the Anglican Church. But it is my deep conviction that, if corporate reunion has any chance of ever becoming reality, it will be achieved along a line not indeed identical but analogous to the Anglican one. The first effective achievement in this field, the United Church of South India, clearly points in that direction.

Thus the Anglican Church has indeed a message to deliver which is of universal range. It appeals not only to those individuals, whatever their nationality, who care to listen to it, but to all Christian Churches in their search for unity. She is, so to say, in her many-sidedness, a microcosm of the Church Universal; and she is also, owing to her comprehensiveness, an anticipation of what reunited Christendom could become in the future. Some of you may possibly be more critical than I am, and find the picture I have attempted to draw too bright and optimistic. I am fully aware of the weaknesses of your Church, too, but I think that the positive features definitely outweigh them. It depends on her not to become unequal to her task, by exchanging the precious values imparted to her for some illusory jewels borrowed from elsewhere.

AUTHORITY AND DISCIPLINE IN THE CHURCH

By Rev. W. G. Fallows, M.A., Vicar and R.D. of Preston

DR. Hook, the famous Vicar of Leeds, preached in 1838 in the Chapel Royal on the text, 'Hear the Church.' Fixing his eyes on the young Queen Victoria, he ended his discourse with a moving eulogy of the Church. The Queen, however, marked her disapproval by drawing the curtains in front of her pew with a sharp, decisive rattle. This rather churlish gesture reflected Victoria's marked dislike of the authoritarian conception of the Church that was the burden of the preacher's message. We may say of her conduct on this occasion that it typified the feelings of the inarticulate mass of English churchpeople who inwardly resent and resist any rigid doctrine of the authority of the Church. This frame of mind, so common among the laity of the English Church, is a healthy sign. Authority in any sphere must be constantly watched to keep it within reasonable bounds. The Authority of the Church is no less subject to the vigilant scrutiny of its members than is the Authority of any other institution. Authority feeds on itself:

> 'The danger,' says Creighton, 'to which all institutions are exposed is that they are founded for the good of men, but as they become powerful they tend to exist primarily for their own good. Ease of organisation, order and regularity are what every institution inevitably aims at. It insensibly demands that men should take the form in which they can be most easily organised and dealt with. This is the danger which has always beset the Western Church. It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the history of that church is a series of struggles to keep it a humane institution.'

But authority there must be. To oppose the so-called religions of authority to the religion of the spirit is false and misleading. All the higher religions of mankind are religions of authority. Christianity is certainly a religion of authority, and there is a true sense in which we can speak of the authority of the Church.

But we must first be clear what we mean by authority. There are two types of authority represented by the Latin words *auctoritas* and *imperium*. Authority of the former kind implies no power of coercion; it is the capacity to impart knowledge and guidance; it is concerned with matters of fact and truth. Its rule is moral rather than legal, its method is persuasive rather than coercive. True authority has the right to command respect, assent and loyalty. Authority in this sense belongs to every department of knowledge, and we are dependent on it every day of our lives. When Dean Inge was asked whether he was interested in liturgiology and he

replied, 'No, neither do I collect postage stamps,' he was disclaiming authority in the spheres of liturgy and philately. On the other hand, it would be right to call Dean Inge an authority on Plotinus and Mysticism, or to describe Russell as an authority on lupins and Mrs. Beeton as an authority on cooking. Authority commands respect, therefore, only when it is exercized within the sphere of its own competence.

Authority in religion is akin to authority in anything else. When we speak of the authority of the Church, we mean its claim to command assent and loyalty that derives from its capacity to impart knowledge and guidance about God and His will for man. The Church speaks with authority as the guardian of a revelation of God more adequate than can be found elsewhere.

The second type of authority (corresponding to the Latin *imperium*) is of a different kind. This is the authority of command and control. Whereas '*auctoritas*' commands assent, *imperium* implies the power to enforce it. This coercive authority of the Church is largely a thing of the past, though the Roman Church has never officially repudiated its right to coerce in the interests of the human soul and what it regards as religious truth. Although the authority of the Church in the sense of *imperium* is a matter of past history, it is still useful to preserve the distinction between *auctoritas* and *imperium*. And when, as in this paper, authority is linked with discipline, we are thinking of the Church's control over its members as much as its trusteeship of Christian truth. In any case the two cannot be divided, and the control and discipline which the Church exercises over its members is largely determined by its conception of the grounds and nature of its authority. Behind different conceptions of the Church's rule (*imperium*) there lie different conceptions of the Church's authority (*auctoritas*). Those who advocate an inclusive liberal and tolerant policy for the organization and discipline of the Church differ from those who advocate a rigid, exclusive policy in their understanding of the authority of the Church.

Before we discuss the rule of the Church, something must therefore be said of the nature of its authority. What is the source or ground of this authority? Two great historic attempts have been made to make faith rest on external authority; the authority of an infallible Church and the authority of an infallible book. This is not the place to examine the defects of both these views. They are equally repudiated by the vast majority of English Churchpeople. Both views, however, contain a true principle. The one enshrines the truth of tradition, the authority of the stored spiritual experience of Christian history and of the corporate mind of the

Church. The authority of the book, rightly understood, is the authority of the records of revelation, the witness of those to whom truth has been revealed. Neither authority is or can be final or absolute, for there is no escape from the logical objection that an infallible authority requires infallibility in the recipient as well as in the author of the revelation.

Where then is the seat of authority in the Christian religion? It is not to be found in a corporation, or in an infallible pontiff, or in the General Councils of the undivided Church, or in those Churches that have maintained an episcopal succession. The only source of authority is a Person, Jesus Christ, whose work is continued by his Spirit. Jesus Christ then is our primary authority. Because our Authority is a person, it is developing and growing, not static. Our appeal is not only to the records of his life and teaching, but to his Spirit dwelling within us. It is not primarily an external authority, but essentially an internal authority. Our appeal to this authority is not to isolated sayings consulted as an oracle, but to the teaching as a whole interpreted in the light of reason and commonsense.

When the authority of Christ is seen in this light, the Church is saved from placing too much emphasis on a few sayings in St. Matthew's gospel about the authority given by Christ to the apostles. The Church, too, is saved from building upon a few words (variously interpreted and by no means universally regarded as dominical) a superstructure claiming to be the one true Church and claiming authority to teach and to rule in the name of the Lord.

So, too, by this internal and spiritual view of the Authority of Christ the Church is saved from over-emphasizing the authority of tradition. Tradition possesses authority, and all our religious experience is conditioned by tradition. We are never cut off from the past. But religious experience may modify tradition, and sometimes the new tradition which possesses authority will bear little if any likeness to the old tradition that has lost its authority.

> 'Individuals', writes William Temple, 'who are specially responsive to those elements in the tradition which are qualified for permanence, receive through their religious experience so vivid an apprehension of the aspects of the truth which these express, that these elements assume an altogether new proportion; the perspective and emphasis of the tradition is thereby changed, and sometimes under the influence of that change, elements which had at one time been accepted with a reverence equal to that paid to any part of the tradition, sink into recognised unimportance and finally drop out altogether.'

Doctrines (like the imminent end of the world or the resurrection of the flesh) once sanctified by universal or almost universal acceptance lose their authority when later experience or clearer

knowledge deprives them of the well-nigh universal assent they had earlier possessed. Tradition is thus continually being refashioned by experience. Some traditional doctrines are abandoned altogether; others become secondary rather than primary, unessential rather than essential. The Authority of the Church, if it is true to Christ and the leading of his Spirit, is never static. Ancient tradition is sacred, but never final or absolute. The appeal, for instance, to the authority of the undivided Church — so popular in some circles to-day — may be an appeal to falsehood as much as to truth.

> I know how well the fathers taught
> What work the latter schoolmen wrought;
> I reverence old time faith and men
> But God is near us now as then;
> His force of love is still unspent
> His hate of sin as imminent.
> And still the measure of our needs
> Outgrows the cramping bounds of creeds;
> The manna gathered yesterday
> Already savours of decay;
> Doubts to the world's child heart unknown
> Question us now from star and stone.

John Greenleaf Whittier's lines are a warning to those who lay too great store on the authority of Tradition. The doubts and questionings of the modern mind, which to Christendom's child heart were unknown, can never be satisfied or resolved by an appeal to the *consensus fidelium* of an earlier or even the earliest age of Christian thought. Our primary authority is a Person whose work is continued by his Spirit and there must therefore be, as Temple says, a 'perpetually fresh response to the unchanging Lord in ever-changing conditions.' The authority of the Church can only be derivative. It is only as the Church is faithful to the mind of Christ and to the leading of his Spirit that it can command the respect, loyalty and obedience of men.

Thus far we have been speaking of authority in the sense of *auctoritas*. We pass now to a consideration of authority in the sense of *imperium* — the rule and discipline of the Church. Our contention is that the meaning we give to the *auctoritas* of the Church governs our understanding of the manner in which the *imperium* of the Church should be exercised. 'What think ye of Christ?' It is by our answer to that question that our conception of the rule and discipline of the Church will be determined. The purpose of this authority is order and unity; without it the Church would have no continued existence. Doubtless there will always be a tension between the claims of authority and the claims of freedom. It arises, to use Creighton's phrase, from 'the need of the

individual to be free and the need of the institution to be something.' Perhaps the greatest contribution of the Church of England to Christendom has been its attempt to hold a true balance between order and liberty. 'The Church of Rome,' says Creighton, 'cares for truth and order, but subordinates truth. The Nonconformists care for truth and liberty, but truth is dissolved into opinion. The work of the Church of England is to maintain truth held according to liberty, yet with order. It is hard to maintain the three together, but this constitutes England's work.' How can the Church of England to-day be true to its peculiar vocation and unite order with liberty and truth with freedom? That question takes us to the heart of ecclesiastical policy in doctrine, in worship and in morals. The right answer to it will involve a frank recognition of what might be called the *tertium quid*. The Anglo-Catholic and Evangelical parties in the Church are recognized as alternative but loyal allegiances within the Church of England. But there has been scant recognition of what for many of us is a still more excellent way. There is, for instance, but little of the liberal and modernist temper to be found in the pages of the 1928 Prayer Book.

The *Doctrinal Report*, which freely recognized the existence of non-traditional views, has been 'soft-pedalled' ever since it appeared. A report which took some fifteen years to produce should have been followed by official action. The representative body of English theologians who produced it, under the august chairmanship of William Temple, deserved more thanks for their pains than the neglect with which their labours have been virtually silenced. The only comment that is now made on the report is that it has no official status. In this way any inconvenient appeal to its contents is swiftly quashed. Or, to cite a more recent example from a different sphere, Anglo-Catholic and Evangelical groups were both invited to make contributions on the tension between the Catholic and Protestant interpretations of Christianity. The same task was assigned to a group of Nonconformist theologians. The purpose of these considered statements was to help forward the cause of Christian unity. The absence of any statement of the liberal view (except by the authors of *Catholicity*, who were out of sympathy with it) in a matter of such great moment as that of Church Relations in England is a glaring example of the scant respect that is paid to the liberal tradition.

'The rigid righteous,' says Burns, 'is a fool,' and not least we may add in the matter of Church relations. A rigid doctrine of the authority of the Church is the greatest stumbling block to the cause of Christian unity to-day. This view finds its basis in a narrow

interpretation of apostolic succession, for which the scriptural and historical grounds are flimsy and shaky in the extreme. To those who stand fast upon such uncertain ground we can but say, as John Locke said to those who insisted on the strict doctrine of apostolic succession:

> 'Let them shew me the edict by which Christ has imposed that Law upon his Church. And let not any man think me impertinent, if, in a thing of this consequence, I desire that the terms of that edict be very express and positive.'

Comprehension and freedom are essential for Christian unity to-day. They are demanded, however, not for the sake of unity, but for the sake of truth, not because they will promote closer relations between Churches, but because they bring us nearer to the Gospel and to our primary authority, Jesus Christ. 'Vitals in religion are few,' says Benjamin Whichcote. To allow less variety in Christian belief and practice than is found in the New Testament is an offence against charity and truth and a needless cause of division.

> 'They are the greatest schismatics,' says Chillingworth, 'who make the way to heaven narrower, the yoke of Christ heavier, the differences of faith greater, the conditions of ecclesiastical communion harder and stricter than they were made at the beginning by Christ and his apostles.'

The purpose of authority in the Church is to preserve order and unity. An authority that preserves order at the price of unity, or order at the price of liberty, is deficient because it is grounded on a doctrine of Church authority too narrow and too rigid to comprehend the largeness of truth. This, as we have seen, is the chief stumbling block in the sphere of Church relations. So, too, in the sphere of worship and the sacraments. The tendency of the English Church has been to identify order and unity with uniformity. History has exposed the falsity of this ideal and the impossibility of achieving it. A reasonable comprehensiveness is needed if unity and order are to be maintained. The unity of comprehensiveness is the unity of the centre with the circumference always changing. 'Our end,' says Hooker, 'ought always to be the same, our ways and means thereunto not so.' In worship the Church must exercise authority, else every man is a law unto himself. But the authority must be comprehensive; services should be regulated but not uniform. Nor should the permissible variety be restricted to those forms of worship which are broadly acceptable to Anglo-Catholic and Evangelical Church members. A place must be also found, recognized by authority, for forms of public worship that embody the liberal ideals. Rigorists may object that this would be three Prayer Books in one volume. Why not? Those

who dwell so closely together may learn from each other, and the worship of Heaven, we may suppose, will be in harmony rather than in unison.

There are many signs in the life of the Church of England to-day that the authority of the Church over its members is being tightened. The emergence of the Baptismal Reform Movement, whose aim is to put a fence round the font and to impose stricter discipline on those who bring their children to be baptized, is a case in point. In recent years this movement has grown and has attracted to itself a considerable body of clerical supporters. Of these enthusiasts we may say that their motives are pure, but their methods are puerile. Their desire to elevate the importance of the sacrament of Holy Baptism, to prevent the superstitious and indifferent resort to it is wholly praiseworthy. But these worthy motives are better served by other methods. To refuse to admit dissenters as godparents, for instance, or to require a written undertaking that the child will be brought up in the Church of England, is to misunderstand the nature of Baptism, which is Baptism into the Church of God, and to misunderstand the temper of the laity which resents interference of this kind. These pastoral methods are not those characteristic of the English Church, nor are they likely to succeed in drawing Church and people closer together.

Alfred Fawkes, in a letter to *The Times*, once described the characteristic mission of the Church of England as the 'Apostolate of the Indevout.' This distinctive mission can only be fulfilled if the pastoral methods of the English Clergy are true to the spirit of Jesus. 'He that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.' Those who like tidy administrative systems and a clearly defined discipline for Church members will not approve this inclusive rather than exclusive system. But the fact is that the old discipline of penalties and excommunications has long since broken down, and cannot be restored except by transforming the Church of England into a narrow sect still more completely out of touch with the life of the people. Any attempt to restore an external discipline will destroy the distinctive character of our Church and make the achievement of its mission as the Church of the nation more difficult and distant than ever.

The application of these principles can be seen in the question of the admission of divorced persons to Holy Communion and in the more complex question of the remarriage of divorced persons in church. There are many divorced persons who have remarried and are regular and devout communicants in the Church of England. The suggestion that each case should be submitted to the

Bishop and that the Incumbent should withhold the sacrament until he has the written authority of the Bishop to administer it is both unworkable and uncharitable. These regulations which were made by the Convocations some years ago have not, so far as we know, been challenged. But they have been ignored both by the lay communicants concerned, who take the view that their eligibility to receive the sacrament is a matter to be settled at the bar of their own consciences, and by many clergymen who are glad to see them at the Lord's Supper and have no intention of withholding the sacrament or troubling overworked bishops with unnecessary letters. In general, our conclusion would be that the Church should exclude none from sharing its life and worship except when such a practice is a scandalous denial of profession.

What then can be said of the more difficult question of the remarriage of divorced persons in Church? Is this not a matter which calls for some external discipline by the Church over its members? I believe it is, but that the discipline demanded is different from that which the Church, by its existing resolutions, seeks to enforce. It is the duty of the Church to rebuke as well as to exhort. The Church cannot fulfil its responsibility in the present marriage situation without rebuking those who flagrantly ignore the Christian standards. It is surely right to refuse the service of the Church to those who have seriously transgressed its standards and for whom the marriage service could not be used without making it a mockery. Some discipline there must be, and though it is often difficult to administer equitably, the attempt must be made by those who have the pastoral responsibility in these matters. That is not to say, however, that remarriage after divorce is not permissible in the Church of England. There is a long-standing and honourable view held by many distinguished English Bishops and theologians that such remarriage is permissible according to the teaching of the English Church. Almost all present-day discussion of this problem overlooks this weighty opinion and is conducted as though it did not exist or had no right to exist. Creighton's words forcibly express the view that is seldom if ever heard from English Bishops to-day:

> 'We as Christians abhor divorce; but when a divorce has been judged necessary are we to refuse any liberty to the innocent and wronged party? It seems to me a matter for discretion on equitable grounds in each case. I could not advise any of my clergy to refuse to solemnise a marriage of an innocent party who genuinely desired God's blessing. I prefer to err on the side of charity.'

Our claim for pastoral freedom in this matter should not be based on our legal rights, but on our understanding of the mind of Christ. It is not because we deny the competence of resolutions

in Convocation to over-ride the marriage law that we plead for a judicious use of a freedom that in fact exists. It is not our reading of the statute law but our reading of the Gospels that prompts us when in doubt to err on the side of charity.

The Church to-day must make its protest against those who pay such scant respect to the Christian ideal of marriage. The Church, too, must make its witness to the Christian standards. But this duty is more effectively discharged by teaching, by preparation for marriage, by marriage guidance, and by example, than by denying to those who have been grievously wronged in a first marriage the blessing they so earnestly desire in a second.

In the minds of many clergy to-day there is an uncomfortable tension. They desire to be loyal to the Church to which they belong, to the resolutions of the Convocations and the Lambeth Conference, and to their own Bishop. On the other hand, they desire pastoral freedom to interpret their duty in this matter, according to their own conscience and in agreement with a long and honourable tradition in the Church of England. Above all, they believe such a policy to be more in accord with the compassion of Christ than the unofficial regulations now being imposed without any discrimination as between Christian and non-Christian, innocent and guilty, or penitent and impenitent. Will the Bishops trust their clergy to exercise such pastoral discrimination with a real sense of responsibility? Such a gesture would ease the tension for many clergy who, like Bishop Creighton, prefer to err on the side of charity.

Authority and discipline in the Church is a vast subject with many ramifications. It has only been possible to touch on a few of them. The impression may have been given that the less authority and discipline there is in the Church, the better it will be. We do not shrink from that conclusion, though it would be better to say the less authority and discipline that is *needed* in the Church the better it will be. Church discipline of the legal kind comes not from our Lord, but from Judaism. But of course there must be a legal discipline over the officials of the Church. The Fathers in God must rule; they must exercise a discipline over their clergy and the clergy must have a right of appeal. It is not intended in this paper to enter into the vexed question of Church courts and of the legal machinery of discipline.

There is, however, one further topic which must be briefly noticed, namely, the authority and discipline of the Church in the sphere of thought. It is the duty of the Church to drive out heresy, to preserve and proclaim the truth. But the heterodoxy of to-day

is often the orthodoxy of to-morrow. Thought looks after itself when it is free by producing more thinking and fresh investigation. Little, if any, disciplinary action is called for in this sphere. The way to condemn a supposedly heretical book by a Christian Bishop is not to call for his resignation or for the Convocations to recite the Nicene Creed, but for someone to write a better book on the same theme. It is by freedom, not by discipline, that truth will prevail. 'The Church,' says R. H. Malden, 'which succeeds in allowing to its members the largest measure of intellectual freedom may venture to hope that it is most faithful to our Lord and the best interpreter of his mind.' The same writer argues that the Church of England is distinguished among the Churches of Christendom by its theory of the nature of truth:

> 'The Anglican Communion stands for a particular theory of the nature of truth, which alone can make the union of the Christian world possible. It believes that truth can flourish out of the earth and that righteousness can look down from heaven. But there is no short or easy route to this consummation. It can never be attained unless the apparently hostile principles of authority and freedom are each given their proper place within the Church. The extreme difficulty of this task can never be an excuse for abandoning it.'

To that statement we may add that the ideal of the Church of England—of Authority with Freedom, truth with liberty and order with comprehensiveness is needful to-day not only for the cause of Christian unity but also for the task of evangelism. Those twin tasks, unity and the conquest of men's minds and hearts by the truth of the Christian religion, form together the greatest challenge which the Church has to face to-day. In the fulfilment of that task the liberal tradition in the Church of England has a great and indispensable part to play. The signs of the times, as some prophets interpret them, may not seem propitious. Authority in many quarters appears to be choking freedom. But while our small but influential Church remains true to its distinctive genius, the future is full of hope. We may say of her to-day as Fuller said of her during the Commonwealth, 'Blessed be God, the Church of England is still (and long may it be) in being, though disturbed, distempered, distracted. God help and heal her sad condition.' A true Christian can never be a victim of despair. Though our cause may have its setbacks and the vision be not for to-day, we can but be faithful to the light as we see it and strive for the future we may never see. 'Though it tarry wait for it, because it will surely come.' Meanwhile we cannot do better than take to ourselves the self-effacing words of George Tyrell. 'Had I been Moses,' he said, 'I don't think I should have felt not entering the promised land one bit, so long as I knew that Israel would do so one day.'

THE CHURCH IN THE PARISH

CHRISTIAN UNITY IN PRACTICE

By the Rev. NORMAN POWER, M.A., Vicar of Immanuel, Birmingham

LAST December there was a correspondence in the *Spectator* about reunion.

After enduring this for some weeks in silence, for theological correspondence in both Ecclesiastical and Lay publications seems often to be written by God's very peculiar people, I was rash enough to intervene with a brief epistle. It must have some merit, despite its authorship, for it was reprinted in the *Modern Churchman*.

As it is very short, will you forgive me if I quote it?

> SIR,—In many districts, especially new areas where the Christian minority is drawn together and ancient squabbles seem less important than a united Christian witness, a great measure of unity is already achieved. Here we have inter-Communion services in each other's churches, we share each other's buildings, we plan visiting campaigns together, and Anglican and Free Church choirs go carol-singing together. We certainly have 'the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.' All we haven't got is uniformity, and that would be very dull.—Yours respectfully, N. S. POWER.

This letter had repercussions, of which this paper is one. Others were a stream of letters. Many of them were a joy to read, but some were not.

One kind friend wrote that I was driving the readers of the *Spectator* into the commodious bosom of the Pope, whither they would recoil in horror at the terrible possibility of associating in worship with Nonconformists. Others accused me of breaking innumerable rules, regulations, rubrics and canons and demanded by what authority I associated in worship with the 'free' Churches.

The result was to strengthen my life-long loathing for 'the little laws that lackies make' and to convince me that the multiplication and re-issue of Canon Laws will have a stifling effect on practical efforts towards Christian unity, as well as in many other Christian enterprises.

Is it not extraordinary that so much time should be spent on rules and regulations in the name of Him who was hailed as a deliverer from the bondage of the law? I believe that Christian unity depends in no small measure on our determination, despite a plethora of canons, to maintain 'the glorious liberty of the

children of God' and to 'stand fast in the freedom wherewith Christ has set us free.'

As a matter of fact, we in the Church of England have ample external authority, for those who value it, for our efforts towards unity. Hooker insists that only notorious evil livers should be excluded from Communion. There is the long tradition of occasional conformity; there is the historic claim of the Church of England to be the Church of the English people; there is a parochial tradition which insists that all who live in the parish may claim the ministrations of the Church. This seems to me to be in harmony with the only Authority that really matters, the spirit of the living Christ.

How can we tolerate our divisions when He prayed that we might all be one? How can we commit the sin of exclusiveness in the name of one who said, 'Him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out'?

It was with such arguments that I replied to those who wrote to me, only to be told they were quite irrelevant.

Our chief obstacle is an attitude of mind in which our man-made rules and regulations are paramount and the spirit of Christ is irrelevant. I think the reason is that too often people work for (and against) reunion in an atmosphere of complete unreality — in the conference room, in church newspapers, in theological discussions and places where they talk. For Jesus the qualification for Christian Unity was intensely practical: 'Whosoever shall do the Will of God, the same is my brother and sister and mother.'

I do not know what a Baptist is theologically, but I do know the little group of Christian men and women in my parish who have a church building but no minister, who pray together and take it in turns — even the Youth Club members — to address worshippers, visit the sick, comfort people in trouble and care for the aged and dying.

In the sphere of life and work that is what a Baptist is in my parish. Dare I doubt that such people are doing the will of God (in a district, incidentally, so tough that no policeman likes to venture into it alone)? And if these Baptists are children of my Father and brothers of Christ, will his family feeling be less than Joseph's, who said, 'Thou shalt not see my face except thy brother be with thee'?

At the parochial level, then, Christian Unity is an insistent need. This is especially so in a new area where traditional dislikes and historical differences pale before the need to present a united Christian front against the stupid indifference of life at an almost animal level, as far as spiritual awareness goes, fortified with much

misinformation and a host of ignorant prejudices. In our parishes we can all do a great deal to further the cause of Christian unity. We can keep our worship 'central,' avoiding extremes which make it hard for those on our ritual 'left or right' to join with us. We can let it be known that in God's house all are welcome who wish to worship Him; we can consistently avoid any remark that might offend another denomination.

In my own congregation I have Methodists, Baptists, an Old Catholic, a Roman Catholic, and, for some years, an Indian who said he was a disciple of Ghandi. He was one of the best Christians I have ever met, and if he reads this in New Zealand I wish him well!

Then there are always places where fruitful work can be shared. Community Associations are an example, but lately I have had some experience of a flourishing Y.M./Y.W./C.A. Joint Centre. Here one can share the work of evangelization with members of other denominations on a basis of equality, learning to respect their sincerity and to understand the contribution they have to make to the family of Christ.

Here one can meet young people from, sometimes, the worst type of home, people who have no vestige of belief or training and who, in some cases, are ex-members of criminal gangs. What they need are the stark essentials of our Faith and the impact of the spirit of Christ. It is impossible not to feel that what matters is that they should become Christians. That is more important than which denomination they may join. We find ourselves stressing, not Anglicanism or Methodism, but Christianity, and doing this together to show we have no denominational axe to grind. This experience convinces me that it is the Christianity underlying our different versions of it which will win the world for Christ.

Another opportunity is afforded by the shortage of ministers in other denominations, which seems to me even worse than the shortage in the Church of England. My Church Army sister and I are often invited to speak at our local Methodist and Baptist churches. Sometimes we are asked to visit their sick and to do pieces of pastoral service. We have long since ceased to be aware of any denominational barriers to Christian unity. To worship and work with these people is to *know* that they are fellow-members of Christ, 'and there's an end on't.'

But there is a danger that numerical ministerial superiority may give us a false, patronizing attitude — a loathsome form of pride. May I commend one way of correcting this?

One Sunday evening, during Evensong, I told my congregation that, as an act of Christian unity, I proposed to attend evening

Communion at the local Methodist church. I invited any to come with me who wished to share in Christ's prayer of unity among his disciples. Nearly all my P.C.C. and all the church officers came with me, including some I had thought were 'high Church' (sorry, but what phrase *is* there?). This was the most moving Communion Service I have ever attended. If ever worshippers felt the presence of their Lord, we did that night. We were very conscious of God's blessing on what we had done.

I shall be told, I know, that this is quite irrelevant, that some rule or regulation has been broken and, no doubt, there is or will be a Canon Law against it. But in the reality of the act the power of unity in Christ carried its own unanswerable conviction.

At our next evening Communion in the Parish Church, a service we have after Evensong once a month, I was not surprised to see the Methodist minister and his flock. I asked him to come into the sanctuary, and together we recollected the Last Supper. I don't know how many rules we broke. I do know that God's blessing was there. It was, by the way, a Feast Day, the Feast of the inauguration of the Church of South India. I expected criticism and opposition, but none came. No doubt if we had had a debate about it sparks would have flown. But by the 'fruit test,' in the reality of the act, we knew we were doing God's will.

Another act of unity was a shared parochial mission in which every house in our huge parish was visited. It culminated in an assembly in the Methodist Church (with Baptist and Y.M.C.A. contingents) and a great procession to the Parish Church, which could not hold the people who came, and a united service at which the Methodist minister preached. Other minor co-operative efforts I have already summarized in the letter quoted above.

In the parish of Summerfield, under the leadership of the Rev. J. F. Hinett, B.D., M.C.U. (an old Riponian), we had, during the war, a series of united open-air services in the local park. After Evensong every church in the district converged in procession on the park, where thousands of people were drifting about. A vast congregation was formed and the combined choirs led the singing with the help of a Salvation Army band. A microphone was used and the preaching shared. One night we had a series of short addresses from the members of the Youth Clubs of the different denominations. These services made a great impression on the whole district.

The various ministers met once a month for Bible Study and Communion, at which we practised inter-Celebration.

Will you forgive a plunge into parable? No doubt, in the days of primaeval chaos, the archangels debated the difficulties of

creation, but the spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters. That spirit is moving now towards the creation of the United Church of Christ. The people are far more ready for it than is represented in discussions in high places. I believe it must begin at the local level without attempt at uniformity. Let us recognize each other's ministries and share each other's ordination and let us work together in Christ's name and the miracle will happen.

One last point. Our small church is packed week by week, yet the seven hundred families with some sort of church connection are about 0.2 of the population. Every year about a hundred and fifty families come to a Baptism service, most of them not numbered in the seven hundred. These people are not heathen. You can tell that by the way they pray and by their whole attitude to the service. Yet somehow they have drifted away from the worship of the Church, and it is unfair to go into an ivory tower and pretend the fault is all theirs and that they must be excluded. I find the same residuum of genuine faith in the couples I prepare for marriage week by week.

How are we to answer their need?

I feel that we are marking time and that no one denomination has the answer. I am sure that God will show us the way as we try to carry out His will. But it will take the combined resources of every denomination and our divisions are a real stumbling block to the coming of the Kingdom of God.

May I close with a quotation from the Parish Magazine of Summerfield, where the Rev. J. F. Hinett, already mentioned, is Vicar?

Under the heading 'Christians, Unite,' he discusses ways of sharing ordination with other denominations. He continues:

> I fear that we have a long way to go before this happy position is reached. We in the Church of England have to convince the Free Churches that we really mean business. We can do this in two ways, first by closer relations between local churches (and here we have to be thankful for the inauguration of the Birmingham Council of Churches) and secondly by making it quite clear that the harsh and uncharitable comments by a small minority of extreme Anglo-Catholics do *not* represent the opinion of the Church of England.
>
> It is clear that in the presence of an attack of unprecedented fierceness upon Christian Belief and Practice, when we are fighting for our lives against the organised forces of atheism, we Christians *must* unite. Only so can we have any influence at all in healing the divisions that mar and scar our national and international life. We need to remember, too, that our divisions are a stumbling block to the many who are seeking strength and fellowship in Christ against the changes and chances of the mad world in which we live.
>
> May I, in closing, point to the example of the Church of South India? Read, if you can, *A South India Diary*, by Lesslie Newbigin (a former

Presbyterian Missionary, now a Bishop in that Church). In his foreword he speaks of the experiences of the twenty-eight years of negotiation. 'A situation which appeared hopeless, the determination to meet at least once again, and the discovery that when we met together face to face and with unwearying prayer, the way always opened again. It was that experience, often repeated, which convinced almost all who took part in these meetings *that the living God was at work.*' If it happened there, why not here?

THE HOLY SPIRIT AND THE CHURCH

By the Rev. H. C. Snape, Vicar of Whalley, Lancs.

READERS of Shorthouse's novel, *John Inglesant*, will remember his vivid description of the procedure of a conclave for the election of a pope. Each morning before the cardinals proceeded to cast their votes the Mass of the Holy Ghost was celebrated. Such may be still the custom at a papal election. At any rate, it symbolizes the theme of this paper; even the Roman communion, when deprived of its visible head in the person of the vicar of Christ, prays for guidance of the Holy Spirit and claims, whatever part intrigue may in fact have played in the election, that the Holy Spirit has guided its choice. Furthermore, it claims that the gifts of the Holy Spirit are at its disposal; all the sects of Christendom in various degrees lay claim to the same privilege. Unavoidably I am therefore committed to some examination of what the Christian tradition means by the Holy Spirit, of what are the marks of the Church, and what are the rightful claims of the Church.

The answer to the first question may perhaps best be found by seeking the answer to another question, 'Why could not Christians be content to express their belief in God in the two forms of belief in God the Father and Creator and belief in God revealed in Christ?' Why had a distinction to be made between possession by Christ and possession by the Spirit? After all, Christians claim that the Church is the Body of Christ, the instrument through which the Spirit of Christ operates on earth; each Christian is supposed to be possessed by the Spirit of Christ.

Ever since man was a praying animal, his prayers seem to have been answered in two ways. On the one hand, forms of words, rites and ceremonies by the very fact of being repeated and being traditional seemed effective. On the other hand, it seemed as if at times a power which could neither be controlled nor seized by the imagination took possession of a man's whole being and made him

its instrument. This experience left many questions. Is this power always good, even when it urges man on to destruction and death? When its promptings conflict with established ways which are to be followed? Is it the same power which guides our conscience and our reason?

The Hebrews called this power *ruah Jahweh*, the Spirit of the Lord, known primarily as an indescribable force which made a man its mouth-piece. 'The spirit of the Lord was upon me,' 'The word of the Lord came unto me' were the familiar prelude to the utterances of the Hebrew prophets.

All the documents of the New Testament reveal that Christians were those who were conscious of being possessed by a power whom they claimed was the Christ. The first intimation of this kind came to men who had been with Jesus of Galilee and had at least come to associate him in their minds with the conception of the long-expected Messiah. The resurrection-appearances can probably never be fully explained psychologically or rationally; but one thing can be said of them to which all Christians can agree. 'The fact and power of the Resurrection was the fact and power of the present experience of the Spirit of Christ.' 'But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwelleth in you, he that raised up Christ Jesus from the dead shall quicken also your mortal bodies through his Spirit that dwelleth in you' (*Rom.* viii, 11). Fully convinced that the power possessing them was the Messiah, they were also convinced that it was the same power which completely possessed Jesus of Nazareth and made him the Messiah. Furthermore, he in his lifetime had never used the prophetic formula, 'The word of the Lord came unto me.' He spoke with authority; 'But I say unto you,' was his preface, and it seems tolerably certain that he claimed a unique relationship between himself and God. In like manner Paul is only expressing the common experience of Christians of his time when he speaks of the Christ as making him 'a new creature.' The Christ does something more than give words for utterance. To quote Maurice Goguel:

> 'The distinguishing mark of the Spirit for Paul is that this power becomes integrated into the personality to which it gives new life and so makes it the true self.'

But while Christians were convinced that they were possessed by Christ, they were also convinced that Christ is in heaven with God. Hence Paul thinks of believers as possessed by the spirit of Christ rather than by Christ himself. Experience also showed that the Spirit manifested himself in various degrees and in manifest ways. Hence the gifts of the Spirit are spoken of rather than the

gift of Christ. For herein is implied that the action of the Spirit will only yield full fruit in a life beyond. The phenomena of pneumatism were the plainest signs of being possessed by the Spirit. But Paul perceived that often where there was pneumatism there was little else to show possession by Christ. Paul accepts the phenomena of pneumatism as the exterior signs of a transforming force, but they are not for him in themselves the source of that force. The Spirit sets in motion saving activities in the depths of human personality below consciousness. The phenomena of pneumatism are, as it were, the observable manifestations of the presence of Christ, but the essential marks of his presence are the inner tolerance of spirit and humility of mind summed up as *agapé*.

Hence through *agapé* Christians are able to bring the other gifts of the Spirit to the service of the Church, *i.e.* the instrument through which Christ's victory will be completed; through *agapé* each is able to discharge his function without exceeding his rights and powers. 'As the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.' For Paul the Church is guided by the Spirit because each believer is possessed by the Spirit and therefore shows the fruits of the Spirit in joy, peace, and love. Paul was led to assert that the Spirit of Christ was the supreme force at work in the new Israel and manifest in peace and love not only from what he himself had experienced, but also from his awareness that Jesus had taught the supremacy of the Spirit to the letter, *e.g.* the Sabbath was made for man, not man for the Sabbath, and from the identification Jesus made between the Messiah and the Suffering Servant.

To what Paul adumbrated the author of the Fourth Gospel gave more precision. The Christ for him is the heavenly being; the Spirit is the power of Christ at work in the community of believers after the resurrection. Hence he is the Paraclete, a term which no one word adequately translates. By separating the Spirit and the Christ, the knot of eschatology is cut. The second coming is already taking place. The Spirit as for Paul functions below the level of consciousness, but in place of the exterior phenomena of pneumatism, such as could be discerned as transports of excitement and frenzy, the presence of the Spirit is known only to the believer by interior peace of mind, heightened insight, and a mystical consciousness of God. Because, however, union between the believer and Christ comes through the Spirit, its manifestation is still *agapé* as with Paul, and believers will find their fellowship with one another through *agapé*. 'This is my commandment, that ye love one another, as I have loved you' (*John* xv, 12).

It is thus clear that the dual affirmation to which the experience of the Resurrection gave birth, (1) that chosen men have experienced the presence of Christ risen, and (2) that Christ is in heaven with God, rendered it ultimately necessary to distinguish between Christ and the Spirit. For primitive Christians did not experience the presence of a spiritualized Jesus, but an interior power manifest in a variety of forms. As Schweitzer writes :

> 'Of the manifestations of the Spirit the common judgement rated highest the ecstatic speaking with tongues, but Paul maintains with decision the higher right of the rational manifestations of the spiritual, the highest of which is that inner tolerance and charity we know as Christian love, because it is eternal and belongs to God himself. It is the love which is in God, which through the Holy Spirit is shed abroad in the hearts of men (*Rom.* v, 5).' (*The Mysticism of Paul,* p. 170).

But, as Schweitzer again writes (*ibid*, p. 175) :

> 'this large simplicity in the treatment of utterances of the Spirit was only possible in primitive Christianity.'

Paul, convinced that he himself possessed the Spirit, naively assumes that anyone who acknowledges Christ as Lord is giving utterance to the Spirit of God and that all believers will have the supreme gift of love. He himself solves the various problems presented to him by the infant churches in the spirit of charity and humility. But the Church had to maintain itself as an institution with many years of life before it surrounded by an alien and hostile environment. A movement towards centralization and unification in administration was inevitable. Also, as spiritual excitement cooled off, form grew in importance as the correct vehicle of the Spirit. The Spirit came to be regarded as a healing and saving medicine for the soul, conferred through the sacraments. As conflicting views arose, all maintained by men claiming to be inspired by the Spirit, the Church was compelled to judge between them by its own tradition. The later books of the New Testament provide evidence of this change in evaluating the manifestations of inspiration. The Pastoral Epistles emphasize not the gifts of the Spirit in themselves, but the gifts as conferred by rite and gesture. 'Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery' (I *Tim.* iv, 14). The gift of the Holy Spirit is the tradition : 'Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou has heard of me . . . That good thing which was committed unto thee keep by the Holy Ghost, which dwelleth in us' (II *Tim.* i, 13 and 14).

Two factors in the contemporary environment of nascent Christianity finally determined the supremacy of form over content and substituted for the primitive ideal of a community possessed

by the Spirit of Christ a rigid organization, which on the one hand by formal ties from Jesus to the believer through the apostles transmitted the Spirit to each generation, and on the other hand by interpretation of a tradition derived from the apostles proclaimed the truths of God under the guidance of the Spirit. Those two factors were the Roman gift for organization with the imposition of the rule of law and an inheritance of formal argument and a desiccated intellectualism derived from Greece. The new Israel cast away the bonds of Judaism only to imprison its soul in the armoury of Roman legalism and the formal logic of the rhetorician. So remote and intellectualized becomes the concept of the Spirit that the occasion of the Great Schism between East and West is the question, 'Does the Spirit proceed from the Father only or from both the Father and the Son?'

But history discloses that the Church has never been able to control the working of what at least must be called the spirit of life, and whenever the Spirit has stirred men to revolt against ecclesiastical tradition, they have been able to turn to the New Testament in justification. Luther defended the rights of the individual believer by referring to Paul; the Puritans, the Quakers, and in our day the Oxford Groups have all justified themselves by claiming that they were guided by the Holy Spirit and appealed to the New Testament.

But what is perhaps of greater moment for us, the leaders of the enlightenment such as Goethe, Voltaire and their heirs, the writers and scientists of the nineteenth century claimed to utter the truth solely under the guidance of reason and conscience and to pass judgment both on ecclesiastical tradition and its interpretation of the New Testament. Goethe looked forward to the end of the mischievous sectarianism of the Protestants and to the gradual advance from a Christianity of words and beliefs to a Christianity of feeling and action (*Conversations with Goethe*, p. 425). In Samuel Butler's sardonic phrase they felt themselves bound to sacrifice Christ for Christ's sake.

The Renaissance, the enlightenment (*Aufklärung*), and the scientific movement challenged the claim of the Christian Churches to be the exclusive instrument of the Holy Spirit. For they not only showed themselves to be the spontaneous product of a living impulse bringing forth fruits in new forms of beauty and new revelations of truth, but also to be inspired with a greater degree of inner tolerance and charity than could be found in the Churches. For the most part the Churches have resisted the challenge by separating themselves completely from the spirit of the enlightenment and building up separating walls. Such has been the policy of

Rome followed among Protestants by the Neo-Thomists and Neo-Calvinists. Such apparently is the policy of the Anglican hierarchy, if the Report on the Conversion of England represents their opinion by denouncing humanism as the age-long lie. On the other hand, Christian liberals tended to follow the leaders of the enlightenment at their weakest point, which was their unqualified optimism concerning human nature. To them a doctrine of the Holy Spirit seemed unnecessary because it seemed superfluous to seek divine help. They seemed to do little more than give to the process of the enlightenment a religious terminology. Christian traditionalists repudiated liberalism very largely because liberals seemed to deny that man stood in need of religion. By exaggerating, however, human incapacity through original sin, they virtually deny the reality of the Holy Spirit and any doctrine concerning the Spirit.

The enlightenment and the scientific movement were a product of Christianity and at the same time a challenge to the Christian tradition. The fruits of those movements represented by the control and understanding of nature granted through them and by the increased sense of social obligation cannot be accounted as less than the fruit of the working of the Holy Spirit. We are ready to admit that Man may direly misuse his knowledge and turn the state into an instrument of power, but, as Professor Gilbert Murray has just reminded us, for the state to be also conceived of as an instrument of human welfare represents a considerable advance. We are not going to deny that the Holy Spirit has guided the Church, because in the name of Christ Christians have sometimes championed the cause of tyranny and oppression. We are therefore faced with the necessity of formulating the doctrine of the Holy Spirit and the Church, which will take account of the fact that the Spirit of God is at work outside the Churches and apparently in opposition to the Christian tradition.

Both St. Paul and the author of the Fourth Gospel, as I have shown, described the Spirit as Christ working in men, the Spirit because Christ at the same time is mysteriously active in His perfection beyond us. The Spirit is manifest by life and love. Paul emphasizes love as a quality of moral action, the Fourth Gospel as the nature of the mystical union between Christ and his disciples and between the disciples themselves.

That we are all animated by a will to live and create is a commonplace. It was the main plank in the philosophies of Schopenhauer, Nietzche, Bergson, and Bernard Shaw. But we are also animated by a fear of change expressed in our respect for tradition and our desire for form, because form codifies and fixes habits of

thought and action. In Jesus the will to live triumphed over the fear of change not by direct iconoclasm, but by showing the form to be what it really is. He went behind the form to the purpose for which it was created, behind the letter to the spirit. Furthermore, he challenged men's fear of change by allowing the idol to crush the only thing it can crush, *i.e.* the body. The victory was that of love. He who declared that the Sabbath was made for man destroyed the temple and made another in three days by accepting all forms at their true valuation but refusing to turn them into gods or devils. By doing this himself he did it for those who accepted him. That is surely why Paul proclaims *agapé* to be the supreme gift of the Spirit, and that we have our treasure in earthen vessels. Forms and institutions are thus both necessary evils and creative instruments. They are necessary because they are the only way human experience can be transmitted. They are evils because they crystallize experience. To preserve those crystallizations becomes our supreme interest. The institution itself becomes more important than the purpose it was intended to serve. Yet at the same time we need past experience crystallized in forms and institutions to meet the demands the changing present makes upon us. This tension can only be resolved if those who control it are themselves possessed by the Spirit and have therefore the Spirit's supreme gift.

In a severely restricted field, where all moral considerations and crude emotions have been rigorously ruled out, *i.e.* in the study of nature, the Holy Spirit is the only guide accepted. As John Dewey has pointed out, the outlook of the scientific seeker after truth is quite different from that of the scientific technician. The latter is a pupil of Prometheus. Proud and ruthless, he is ready to use the magic formula supplied by the seeker after truth to bring fire down from heaven. But of the former it may be said that the primary requirement is *agapé* towards the workings of nature. He must come to nature prepared to wait and watch. 'Charity suffereth long and is kind.' He must put on one side any personal feelings and must be ready to cast aside any formula, however venerable, and to consider any new hypothesis, however humble may be its origin. 'Charity envieth not . . . beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things.' He must recognize that no hypothesis is final, however firmly verified, but only a step to new truth until knowledge shall vanish away in the direct insight of love. 'Whether there be knowledge, it shall vanish away.'

If it be true that the deepest insight into the external world comes by seeing it through the eyes of love and handling our

symbols of expression with hands of love, it would appear to suggest that in prayer and worship the forms will only be effective if they also are used with love, recognized to be partial means by which the Holy Spirit may come to us. If there is no scientific or logical discipline which can dispense with the personal element, then surely there cannot be any form of religious doctrine or religious practise which is true or effective except only so far as it is found true by someone and effective for someone. And because religion is the activity of our interior personality, there cannot be uniformity. The uniformity lies in our common needs below the level of consciousness and their common satisfaction from the Spirit of God possessing our being, again below the level of consciousness. When we know that and live by that, the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts.

This may be said to have been the ultimate discovery of Puritanism. The Presbyterians rejected episcopacy as a necessary instrument for the Church's guidance by the Holy Spirit. From them we see one sect after another rejecting ordinances and forms until we come to the Quakers, who were described in 1671 as 'the fag-end of the reformation,' claiming that men need no forms at all, either individually or as a community, to find the guidance and power of the Holy Spirit. But they also show what would have happened to the primitive Church if it had refused to accept any forms of doctrine or government as the means of protecting itself and its teaching in an evil world. It would have disappeared. The Society of Friends is bound to be an eclectic body because, as the facts show, the majority of mankind seek for some formal expression and organization in their religion, as in other things. 'The Friends are only enabled definitely to repudiate all doctrinal definition because they take for granted all that part of the Anglican or Presbyterian systems, which they do not expressly deny' (Streeter, *Restatement and Reunion*, p. 153). The society maintains its existence because they are surrounded by bodies maintaining a Christian tradition through methods of doctrinal definition and formal government, just as it can maintain the pacifist position under the protection of those who believe that it is right to bear arms in defence of liberty. The history of the Puritan sects shows that without formal authority the Christian religion becomes a religion of man's own making. We cannot be saved by a religion of our own make. That is why the movement within Christendom is, to use political terminology, from left to right. But, as Streeter went on to say, 'no religion can help me except just in so far as I make it my own' (*ibid.*, p. 40). It is also true that no Church possesses the Spirit except so far as it allows a man to make a religion

his own and acknowledges in its own life that no two men and no two generations will do it in just the same way.

We who acknowledge this must ask ourselves whether we should seek new forms of worship and new expressions of belief. The day for making new liturgies seems to be passing, very largely, I believe, because no satisfactory form of public worship can be drawn up unless it is believed that the use of one form sanctioned by authority is a preliminary requirement to the effectiveness of public prayer. The apparent failure of the free churches, in spite of their freedom in worship, to produce any notable liturgy seems proof of this as well as the failure of the revision of 1928 in common with that of all modern attempts to create new forms of public prayer. Flexibility within the framework of the Anglican tradition interpreted by our spiritual understanding of the New Testament, I would suggest, should be our aim.

What I suggest is true of prayer-book revision I would say is also true of the demands for credal reform and restatement of belief. If a creed is to be satisfying, it must be the spontaneous creation of a conviction that religious belief can be presented as a formal statement compelling intellectual assent. If we accept the New Testament's teaching on the Holy Spirit, we know that that is impossible. The faith that justifies is not intellectual assent, but is a passion controlled by loyalty to and trust in Jesus Christ. Because we know through the light of Christ that religious truth is not an object which can be expressed in an abstract statement, we find that every effort at restatement is either so vague that it is meaningless because we have consciously tried to satisfy everybody, or so partial that it satisfies no one except those who have devised it. I cannot do better than quote Streeter again :

> 'It is not the language or the intellectual forms, but the spiritual facts and values—of which that language and those forms were always a confessedly inadequate expression—that require to be interpreted. And those facts and values are only apprehended fully in a community which possesses a rich and varied religious life' (*ibid,* p. 78).

Let the day come not when there are new creeds, but when creeds have become atrophied organs in the Church's life and museum-pieces in the Christian tradition because the Church has become once again what the New Testament declared it to be, the community of the Spirit.

CHRISTIAN REUNION

By the Rev. A. W. Adams, B.D., M.A., Dean of Divinity of Magdalen College.

THE papers so far read at this Conference have been concerned for the most part with the Church Past and Present. The subject allotted to me has more clearly a future, if not indeed an eschatological reference. For although no subject has been more discussed and debated in ecclesiastical circles during the last half-century than Christian reunion, the effective results have hardly been commensurate, and I think it must be admitted, so far as this country is concerned, disappointingly meagre. With the history of the reunion movement, the discussions, reports, statements, the theological technicalities, I shall not concern myself in any systematic way. Not infrequently it has seemed that a deadlock has been reached, especially in negotiations conducted at the 'high policy' level by ecclesiastics and Church leaders. Thus, in a letter dated February, 1935, Bishop Henson wrote:

> 'I think there are many signs that the religious world in Great Britain is becoming weary of discussions about Reunion. No progress is made, because the rock on which any advance is shattered remains, and will for a long time if not for ever remain, *viz.* the claim of the episcopal government (or the papal as the case may be) to take rank among the essentials of Church life. In the XVIIth century as in the XVIIIth and in the XIXth, and now again in the XXth, good men lament the obviously mischievous divisions, but they are not prepared to make any concessions on the main question, with the result that every negotiation ends in failure, generally with some growth of fresh exasperation.[1]

But although the Bishop, with his usual acumen, placed his finger on what has become the major stumbling-block, hope, if still deferred, is by no means dead. Three recent events may, I think, be singled out as important in their different ways. (1) The inauguration of the World Council of Churches at Amsterdam in 1948. (2) The Archbishop of Canterbury's sermon in 1946 before the University of Cambridge, *A Step Forward in Church Relations*, which led to fresh conversations between representatives of the Archbishop and the Evangelical Free Churches in England, as well as to a series of statements giving the views of Anglo-Catholic, Evangelical and Free Church Theologians.[2] (3) The inauguration in 1947 of the South India Church, uniting Anglicans, Presbyterians, Methodists and Congregationalists in that

[1] *Letters of Herbert Hensley Henson*, ed. E. F. Braeley, 1950, p. 88.

[2] *Catholicity*, Dacre Press, 1947; *The Fulness of Christ*, S.P.C.K., 1950; *The Catholicity of Protestantism*, Lutterworth Press, 1950.

area, and at the same time its passing out of the Anglican Communion.

Each of these is still having its repercussions, and together they show that Christian reunion is still a live issue. I shall have more to say about them presently. But first there are one or two general considerations which are worth attention.

Leaving religion on one side for the moment, the twentieth century has seen the greatest breaking-down of barriers — physical, economic, cultural, racial — in the whole history of mankind. It is a truism to say that we are all closer together than ever before. But the throwing down of many ancient barriers has not inhibited the growth of new ones, nor the rise of fresh tyrannies professing the old virtues of justice, freedom and equality with brazen effrontery. We have all the machinery, in the shape of paper constitutions and agreements, for world organization and government. But so far it has proved a hollow sham.

Even in the democratic half of the world the removal of physical and other barriers does not always lead to greater understanding and co-operation, and it is patent that the unity of energy, direction and sentiment which bound together nations and classes in the crisis of actual war is falling apart in the aftermath of uneasy peace. Looking at our own country, few will regret that the barriers of privilege — social, economic, educational — are giving way by being tackled at the national level. But it certainly seems that the centralization and bureaucratization of society and its activities tend to produce a drab uniformity, the whittling down of personal and corporate responsibility and initiative, and the loss of all that rich diversity of life and character which is one of the chief glories of the human race, and not least of our own nation. Size and complexity of organization not only are no guarantees of efficiency in administration: they do not guarantee internal unity either, and they are often productive of apathy and irresponsibility through loss of contact between the leaders and the led and the reduction of human personality and values to marks and figures on a paper. This is only another way of saying that one of the great problems of the twentieth century is that of finding a synthesis between planning and initiative. But this is really no new problem at all, but the old one of authority and freedom in a new guise. It may be that in the new world small independent institutions, cultural, social, educational, philanthropic, have had their day. It may be that at their worst they have been inefficient, a drag on progress, and concerned with the few rather than the many. But it cannot be denied that at their best they showed qualities of vigour and enterprise in promoting new ideas and methods, and encouraged

a tradition of rich and varied corporate life, which are all too easily lost when they are merged in larger units.

I have said this not to engender pessimism in our approach to Christian reunion, but in order that we should be quite clear as to what we are doing, how we do it, and the motives with which we do it; and as a reminder that the losses may outweigh the gains. We should never forget that, whether in religious or secular affairs, we are dealing with the same raw material — human beings, with all their potentialities for good and evil, wisdom and folly. The Roman Church may provide us with a parallel to what I have been saying. In point of numbers it is the greatest Christian communion. It presents a united front to the world. But it is a unity of outward uniformity backed up by rigid and often stifling authoritarianism. Whether there is a corresponding unity of spirit behind that imposing façade, and the pronouncements on dogma (*e.g.* of the bodily assumption of the Virgin) and on secular policy, is another matter. The price that has to be paid for unity of that kind is too high for most of us.

To what extent is Christian reunion desired, with what motives and on what basis? These are not three separate questions: they are so inextricably bound up with each other that they must be treated together.

First, then, as regards the Roman Church. This need not detain us long because its views are well known and its position unequivocal and uncompromising. There is only one Church, and that is the Roman Church, preserved from all possibility of error by the infallibility vested in the Pope. 'Churches' existing outside the Roman Communion are *ipso facto* not churches at all, have no ministry nor (apart from baptism) sacraments. Rome is therefore frankly not interested in reunion because there is no one to reunite with. There is simply the demand for complete submission in faith, morals and order.

The position of the Orthodox Church is not radically different, for although it has been prepared to discuss the possibility of union, it also requires as a first condition complete identity in all matters of doctrine, if not also of practice. The situation is summed up with admirable realism by the Bishop of Derby.

> 'The doctrinal intransigency of the Orthodox Churches in effect constitutes a barrier little, if at all, less formidable than the infallibility claimed by the Church of Rome . . . unity with Rome or with Orthodoxy in any foreseeable period of the future is not to be had.[3]

The prospects for reunion, apart from Rome and the East, would be very different were it not for a numerically small

[3] *Problems of Reunion*, A. E. J. Rawlinson, 1950, p. 174.

group of Anglo-Catholics who, though in the same condemnation as the rest of us so far as Rome is concerned, make similar demands — namely, possession or acceptance of the 'Catholic Faith' and the 'historic episcopate' as they choose to define these things. In practice this seems to differ scarcely at all from the Roman position before the Infallibility Decree of 1870. How this is reconciled with the character and temper of the Prayer Book and Articles, and, what is equally important, with the practice of the Church of England during the last four hundred years, is hard to seek. It can only rest on the belief that the Reformation was a calamitous error and brought no fresh insights or truths to light, and that, so far as the last four hundred years have wrought change and development, history must be reversed. In relation to the Anglican Communion as a whole, the number of those who hold such views is small. But their influence is proportionately great in the formulation of Anglican policy. It cannot be doubted that it was due to pressure from this quarter that the South Indian Church, although including former Anglican bishops, clergy and laymen, is to-day outside the Anglican Communion.

In contrast to what can be called the narrowly dogmatic approach to all questions of reunion is the impetus towards closer understanding and united Christian witness which has grown out of the Ecumenical Movement. The culminating point to date was the inauguration at Amsterdam in 1948 of the World Council of Churches, from which, however, the Roman Church held strictly aloof. The World Council is not concerned primarily with reunion in the strict sense, though it is concerned to promote common action by the Churches, to establish closer relations, and to give expression to the united conscience of Christians on specific issues. By all accounts, the first Assembly at Amsterdam was a profound and moving experience for those who took part in it, not least in the increased awareness that what the different Churches and traditions share is wider and more fundamental than what divides them. As has been said, Churches and Christians may be divided, but Christ is not, and all have a real unity in Him.

None of us will want to underestimate the importance of what has already been achieved in this field. Some such organization is obviously essential in preparing the ground for world-wide reunion in the future. But in its *early* stages reunion is likely to be on a smaller scale than this, and to pin our hopes exclusively on the World Council of Churches would be a mistake for two reasons: (1) the pragmatic approach, which underlies the desire to combine and give a common Christian witness on specific world problems, might lead to reunion of a kind in face of a common danger or

crisis — *e.g.* world Communism: but it gives no guarantee that such a unity would long outlast the crisis which called it into being; and (2) the Ecumenical Movement, in bringing together members of different Churches and traditions and stimulating their understanding of what they have in common, has at the same time thrown them back to reconsider the reasons, historical and theological, for the distinctive positions of their Churches, and thus to a revived denominational and confessional self-consciousness. This is a paradoxical state of affairs, and though it has led to greater understanding and mutual respect, it is likely to lead in the future to sympathetic toleration of divisions, to a sort of ecclesiastical federation, rather than to actual reunion.

We are brought nearer home when we turn to the Archbishop of Canterbury's Cambridge sermon, *A Step Forward in Church Relations*. Realistically the Archbishop concerned himself not with world-wide Christian reunion, but with the first steps towards reunion here in England. Again rightly, as I think, he rejected 'constitutional' and 'federatist' approaches. As he sees it, the Anglican Church is not sufficiently united within itself for any organic or constitutional scheme. Instead, he suggested that what is needed is

> 'a process of assimilation, of growing alike . . . towards a free and unfettered exchange of life in worship and sacrament. . . . My longing is, not yet that we should be *united* with other Churches in this country, but that we should grow to *full communion* with them. . . . The non-episcopal Churches have accepted the principle that episcopacy must exist along with other elements in a reunited Church. . . . Why not also and earlier for the process of assimilation, as a step towards full communion? . . . If non-episcopal Churches agree that (episcopacy) must come into the picture, could they not take it and try it out on their own ground first?'

The proposals put forward by the Archbishop were at first sight attractive to many. That the time is not ripe for any immediate scheme of organic reunion, and that what is needed first is a process of growing together is, I believe, true. No doubt the Archbishop hoped that by giving and receiving of episcopacy the scruples of Anglo-Catholics towards inter-communion as a preliminary to ultimate reunion would be removed. But Anglo-Catholics have shown no more enthusiasm for the proposal than the Free Churches. And the hesitation of the latter can readily be understood. As Bishop Henson pertinently asked, what *kind* of episcopacy are they asked to take into their system? And what guarantee have they that, having taken it, Anglo-Catholics will then or later recognize it as episcopacy in their sense? The Church of South India has already taken episcopacy into its system. But

that did not prevent a minority of bishops at the last Lambeth Conference holding 'that it is not yet possible to pass any definite judgment on the precise status of such bishops, presbyters and deacons' of the South Indian Church — apparently calling in question the status of those who were Anglicans before the union as well as orders conferred subsequently. And if recognition of such 'Free Church episcopacy,' once received, were to be called in question even by a minority, the deadlock would be worse than ever. The cause of reunion in this country would have received a blow from which it might well never recover. The Free Churches can scarcely be blamed for looking such a doubtful gift-horse in the mouth when it might turn out to be no horse at all, but another kind of animal 'without pride of ancestry or hope of posterity.'

What proposals have liberal Churchmen to offer for the solution of a problem which, in so far as it *is* a problem, is man-made and alien to the spirit of Christ and His Gospel? I shall preface my own suggestions by quoting again from Bishop Henson's letters:

> 'It is more than 30 years since I reached the conviction that in a spiritual religion such as Christianity certainly is, questions of specific polity can never be primary; and, therefore, any assumption such as that of our episcopal rigorists that Episcopacy is essential to a rightly constituted Church must always be fatal to true religious fellowship between the Christian Churches. . . .
>
> A few weeks before his death, Archbishop Söderblom stayed here, and talked much with me on the subject of Christian unity, for which, as you know, he was an enthusiast. He spoke of the Conference at Lausanne, and described the painful impression caused by the refusal of the English members to unite in Holy Communion with their non-episcopal colleagues. It reduced to nothing all the pleasant fraternity of the gathering, and showed that nothing had really been changed.
>
> Personally, I have received the Holy Communion with the Presbyterian Church of Scotland, and if I did not feel free thus to express my spiritual brotherhood with the members thereof, I should not make any profession of fraternity.'[4]

'Reunion,' says the Bishop of Derby, 'must begin where it can.' Therefore I shall confine myself to the prospects for Christian reunion in England, which is directly our concern, and for which we can actively help to prepare the way. That is not to say that the process of reunion which has already begun in the mission field is not our concern and does not need our support, nor that we cannot learn from it. But their problem is not quite the same as ours — in some respects it is simpler, and the pressures are different.

There are those who ask whether, apart from a few starry-eyed enthusiasts, the mass of Christians in England really want reunion,

[4] October 21st, 1931, *op. cit.*, p. 64.

whether it is a live issue in that sense, and if not, whether it is worthwhile making any effort at all. Now I think it must be admitted that there are many clergy and ministers who, in spite of all that has been said and written in recent years, are apathetic or faintly hostile. Much of that is due, I believe, to inherited sectarian loyalties and the besetting sin of most Churchmen — the desire not to be disturbed. But the mass of laymen are not so complacent as some of their ministers and clergy suppose — as anyone can easily find out by talking to them. As practical people, they are appalled by the waste of manpower and energy which is a result of the isolation of Churches from each other. They are not distressed by differences of order and service because they know that, human nature being what it is, differences are inevitable. When Christianity comes alive, whether in church or chapel, they will go to it : when it is dead they stay away. It is true that, on the whole, they do very little about reunion — for the very good reason that they have had singularly little leadership or encouragement. But they are impatient of prayers for Christian unity which lead to no action.

It is, then, at the lowest level, so to speak, that the movement towards reunion must begin, by 'growing together' as the Archbishop has said. But not by the Free Churches taking episcopacy into their systems — that cannot be the first step; but by discovering and sharing at the level of the working clergy and ministers and laymen (as has already been discovered to some extent by leaders and representatives of the Churches) of our essential unity in Christ and the Gospel. Neither the giving nor the receiving can be all on one side; we have all much to receive and to give if the 'wholeness' which has been so much stressed recently is to be restored. And the place for that is in the individual parish as much, if not more, than in the Conference and Assembly. We are often told that the parish has had its day. I believe that if the parish were to become the unit of Christian communion in the New Testament sense of that word, it would regain its life and the reason for its existence.

It is here that the Establishment, in spite of its being a complicating factor in the English situation, can be of help. As an established Church, the Church of England has an interest in and a responsibility for the religious life of the nation as a whole, as each incumbent has a responsibility for his parish as a whole. To that extent we are, as members of the Established Church, in a position to take the initiative in promoting unity, and indeed have a duty to do so. Nor should we be acting in a way foreign to the essential genius and spirit of the Church of England. Our Church

neither professes infallibility nor makes any exclusive claim for its particular form of ecclesiastical polity. It prays in the Bidding Prayer 'for Christ's Holy Catholick Church, that is, the whole congregation of Christian people dispersed throughout the whole world,' and that 'all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth, and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace.' It is well known, and has been demonstrated afresh by Prof. N. Sykes,[5] that in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and subsequently the Church of England maintained friendly relations with the reformed Churches of the Continent, whether episcopal or not, recognizing them as true Churches and their ministries and sacraments as real and valid. The evidence for members of Continental Protestant Churches when in England being welcomed at Anglican altars is, says Prof. Sykes, clear and copious, while the corresponding right of Anglicans to receive Communion in reformed Churches abroad is similarly attested.

What we still suffer from is the distinction which was made, on the basis of the Establishment and the Acts of Uniformity, between Protestants abroad and Separatists (*i.e.* Dissenters) at home. The ideal of the Establishment was that the Church of England should be the Church of the whole people. Had religious tempers been different, and our political and dynastic history otherwise than they were, that ideal might have been realized. Unfortunately the bare theory of a single Church, rather than the ideal of a fully comprehensive one, was persisted in long after all hope of its realization had passed away. At the same time, it is clear from the attempts that were made at comprehension from the Anglican side, and in the long-continued practice of occasional conformity (revived by the Methodists in the nineteenth century), that a large body of opinion had no wish to 'unchurch' orthodox dissenters, to deny the reality of their ministries, nor to hinder their reception of the Holy Communion in their parish churches.[6]

[5] *The Church of England and Non-Episcopal Churches in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*, 'Theology' Occasional Papers no. 11, S.P.C.K., 1948.

[6] For occasional conformity (*i.e.* receiving Communion by Dissenters in their parish churches), and the origin of the custom on purely religious grounds, see N. Sykes, *op. cit*, pp. 38ff. The practice was supported by eminent Churchmen on both sides—*e.g.* Richard Baxter 'conformed,' and Sharp, Archbishop of York and a High Churchman, regarded the *refusal* of occasional communion with the Church of England as schismatical behaviour on the part of Dissenters. The attitude of John Humphrey, a London dissenting minister, is clearly expressed in his own words: 'But as for myself, I declare my stated communion to be with the parish . . . and my occasional

Surely then our relations with other Churches in England today must be governed, not by the narrower logic of the Establishment as it was maintained in days gone by, but by the broader logic, more consistent with the genius and spirit of the Anglican Church, in its traditional attitude to other Protestant and reformed Churches abroad. It would, as has been said, have much Anglican practice to support it, as it would have the spirit of Jesus Christ to justify it.

In the absence of any clear lead on these lines from above, the initiative will have to come from below, and at first in a local way. There must be few parishes in England in which there is not at least one Nonconformist chapel besides the church. Yet how many of those who go to church have any idea of how their next-door neighbours worship who go to chapel (and *vice versa*) — though they worship the same God, use the same scriptures, and sing the same hymns? So long as there remain pockets of resistance in the shape of ignorance and prejudice, local exclusiveness and sheer apathy, how can we expect any agreed formula from above, even if it could be found, to work out in practice?

There are several stages which this process of 'growing together' might be expected to take, each of course having been carefully prepared beforehand with local Free Church leaders. The first is essentially preparatory, and would take the form of instructing our lay people in the history of our communion and of the others which are to join with us — the latter being done by representatives of the Churches concerned. When our laymen begin to understand (as most of them do not) what lies behind our divisions, how in this day and age much of it has ceased to be relevant, and how much we share together, they will begin to want to do something about it.

The second stage is to get our people together at the religious level, *i.e.* by the whole congregation of each denomination being invited by its incumbent or minister to join in worship with the others. These services should take place at regular intervals, at the usual Sunday hours, and in turn at each place of worship of those taking part. The order and form of the service should be that of the church or chapel in which it is held. I regard this as most important for several reasons: (*a*) so that members of the different Churches may see for themselves that we worship the same God, in much the same way, and share the same fundamental beliefs; (*b*) while all of us have something to give, we have much

communion with the Nonconformist meetings. . . . In short I am a Nonconformist minister, but a Conformist parishioner, and I know nobody (knowing my constant principles) that is offended at it.'

to receive and much to learn; (*c*) so that it will also be realized that when full reunion comes, variety in forms of worship is not only desirable but essential. The united 'free for all' type of service is best reserved for occasions when the appeal is to those outside the Churches, and united evangelistic witness of this kind will, I believe, often grow spontaneously out of worshipping together as I have described it.

What this is leading to, and I think must lead to if our 'growing together' is to have any full and lasting results, is Christians of the different Churches setting the seal to their fellowship in Christ by receiving together the Holy Communion, again by open invitation and in the different Churches. Intercommunion or (if that term should properly be reserved for the time when full official recognition and agreement has been reached) open Communion I believe to be an essential step *towards* reunion. We would have preferred that this, and not the injection of episcopacy, had been the substance of the Archbishop's appeal for a New Deal in Christian relations, and indeed that he himself had taken the first step, as Bishop Henson suggested, by receiving Communion with the leaders of the non-Anglican Churches and making his appeal to them in person. Failing that, the initiative must come from below, from those who are prepared to take it. And Mr. Norman Power has given us some idea of what we can expect if and when we do.

It might be added that what has been suggested has already been conceded in principle, albeit much hedged about by qualifications. Having in mind, no doubt, the abundant precedents (already referred to) for Anglicans receiving the sacrament in other Churches, and for non-Anglicans being welcomed in our own, the Upper House of Convocation in 1933 resolved that, at the discretion of the Bishop, baptized members of other Churches may be admitted to Holy Communion when cut off by distance from their own places of worship; as members of colleges or schools in the chapels attached to them; or when taking part with Anglicans 'in efforts definitely intended to promote the visible unity of the Christian Church'—which is exactly our aim. As regards our joining with Free Churchmen, some words of the Bishop of Derby may be cited here. After referring to the earlier custom of members of the Church of England communicating in non-episcopal Churches, he writes:

> 'there are undoubtedly Anglicans who in similar circumstances regard themselves as being justified by their consciences in claiming and exercising for themselves the like freedom to-day. It is a claim which must needs be allowed, as being in itself no more than the exercise of a liberty

> sanctioned by precedent. It is in the highest degree unlikely that those who in good conscience thus act will find themselves being subjected to any form of ecclesiastical censure. What they will not be able to do is to claim that what in effect is simply a following of individual judgment has behind it the official endorsement of the corporate mind of the Church.[7]

That is clear enough, and it will do to be going on with. It must be emphasized that at this stage what we do we do as individuals, because we are convinced that it is in accordance with the spirit of Christ and the will of God for us as we understand it. If it *is* right, then it will be justified by its fruits. Gamaliel's words to the Sanhedrin were not only advice to caution in judgment, but encouragement to go on. The crux of the matter is this : do we, or do we not, believe that not only our own Church but these others are true Churches, that their ministries are true ministries and effective in communicating the grace of God in Word and Sacrament, and that in spite of our divisions there is sufficient unity to justify our fellowship with each other? If we do, we are right in going forward. We are not committing the Church officially and as a whole. But I believe that a movement of this kind, once begun, would release a new spirit which would do more for the cause of reunion than many conferences at the high ecclesiastical level.

It would be a not unjust criticism of this paper that it has failed to deal with technical and theological questions concerning the Doctrines of the Church, the Ministry and Sacraments, which nearly all discussions on this subject find themselves involved in, and usually peter out in. But I have nothing to say which has not been said many times already, and it is patent that discussions of this kind do not succeed in convincing those who do not want to be convinced, and have no intention of thinking otherwise than they already do. Nor have I said anything about the order and polity of a reunited English Church when it does come. As will, I trust, be clear by this time, I believe that we must first find our unity in spirit and in truth before we can expect to find and express unity in order and polity. In a united Church, of which our own forms a part, no doubt episcopacy will find its place — that is already accepted in principle by the Free Churches. What they will not accept is any interpretation of episcopacy which requires its acceptance as of the *esse* rather than the *bene esse* of the Church, thereby making their own ministers invalid and reordination a necessary preliminary. No such exclusive view has ever been held by the historic Church of England since Reformation times, and to-day is held only by a minority. The same is true of Sacramental

[7] *Problems of Reunion*, p. 84.

doctrine. Theological differences to-day do not run between the Churches, but across them, and the greatness and the genius of the Church of England is that it can hold many differences of this kind together. Questions of Church polity and the like do not come at the beginning of any process of 'growing together.' Constitutions do not make societies: it is societies that make constitutions — and change them in accordance with the spirit by which they are led. 'To live is to change, and to become perfect is to have changed often.' Structure, the biologists have taught us, follows function, and the function of the Church is to spread abroad the love, the grace, the spirit of Christ. When the time comes, the way to solve these questions will be clear, as it is not clear now. We should remember that when we pray that 'all who profess and call themselves Christians may be led into the way of truth and hold the faith in unity of spirit, in the bond of peace,' we are asking that we ourselves should be guided as well as others.

THE CHURCH AND THE NATION

By Canon T. Guy Rogers, M.C., B.D.

I BEGAN to think about this paper just at the time when all the gorgeous ceremonial, inaugurating the Festival of Britain, was pouring into English homes through television and the wireless. As I listened to fanfares of trumpets, solemn dedicatory services, addresses by the Archbishop setting the right tone to the proceedings and harnessing patriotism to the service of God, I felt tempted to write a preable to this paper. For here in this strange mixture of 'Pomp and Circumstance,' 'Rule Britannia' and 'Land of Hope and Glory,' combined with the most solemn anthems ascribing glory and honour to God alone ('Not unto us, O Lord, be the praise and the honour'), lies the amazing paradox of the relations of Church and State in our national life. To a secular-minded Continent it must all seem incomprehensible, if not hypocritical, and yet to us it seems in some ways suitable and fitting. We like to have our patriotism chastened by some passing glimpse of the majesty of God. We like to invest great occasions and great undertakings with a certain religious significance. Our history and the sense of continuity stretching into the dim unknown fill us with a sense of awe, and we hanker after a spiritual experience which in the ordinary course of things eludes us.

Hence a little fumblingly, but not wholly insincerely, we welcome the ties that still bind the nation to the Christian faith and

permit the Church to give dignity and spiritual meaning to our proceedings. The Archbishop preaching from the pulpit and the King preaching from the portico of St. Paul's say very much the same thing. The tone and temper and the objective are the same. It is what we expect on these great occasions and we are not disappointed. And, even if, in the course of time, the vision gets blurred; if the secular and the spiritual diverge; if events are seen in the light of common day and things grow commonplace and tawdry, the original inspiration is not wholly lost. Something unforgettable remains to be recovered and cherished by a later generation.

It is in these natural spontaneous appeals for what might be called enlightenment, guidance and spiritual help, which come from the nation from time to time, that the charm of the Establishment largely consists. It receives far too little consideration, as attention is usually directed to what are regarded as the more important and certainly the more controversial aspects of the subject. But I hope I may be allowed in this preamble suggested by the pleasing links, discernible in the Festival of Britain, to pay a tribute to this loosely defined but happy relationship. There are so many who take this relationship lightly, ascribe to it little value and even affect to despise it as something superficial or unreal.

But I would remind you that we are all very imperfect people — that most of us are wayward and unstable — that the nation as a whole is exposed to so many influences which tend to deaden its spiritual receptiveness — that we cannot afford to dispense with such help and reminder of the eternal world as the ages of faith have transmitted to us. It may seem a small matter that the House of Commons should open its daily sessions with prayers; that Mayors after their election should come to be churched in their parish churches, and that His Majesty's judges should make it their habit publicly to confess their own sins to Almighty God before sitting in judgment on the sins of their fellow-citizens. But these are all signs of grace in a nation that is not too sure of its way, but still shrinks from going forward into the unknown without faith or hope or love.

So much might so easily be lost never to be replaced. Looking back it seems like a miracle that so many links have been preserved —so many dangers safely negotiated — so many appalling disasters avoided. So much that is precious hangs by a thread. No one cares to contemplate what would happen one day if an heir to the Throne turned atheist, or the leaders of the Church turned fascist, or an iconoclastic Prime Minister started to tear Church and State violently asunder. So far the genius of the

British people seems to enable it to travel safely on the razor edge of possible disasters, but the prayer becomes ever more urgent in Christian circles which realize the danger: 'From all such social *impasse*, from all such spiritual parting of the ways may God in His mercy deliver us.'

I am afraid this preamble gives me away as a person with a touch of nostalgia where the relations between Church and State are concerned. You must blame the Festival of Britain for making me disclose my natural bias so soon, but sentiment when aroused can carry one rather further than intended.

We must now settle down to look at the subject with a more critical judgment, and it is only fitting that the Archbishop of York's strictures and warnings and requests for readjustment in the relations of Church to State as stated in his book, *Church and State in England*, should be given first consideration.

Curiously enough, the ambiguous relations between the Church and the State on the subject of marriage and divorce are not discussed in his book, though many people would think that it is at this point that a clash between the two is most likely. Perhaps the Archbishop regards this as rather an internal problem for the Church and sees his way to an adjustment of relations with the State without much trouble. There certainly would seem to be a willingness on the part of the State to allow for the conscience of the Church in passing legislation and to respect the liberty of the clergy. There is always a way out for the Government — not necessarily the best way — but a way which would seek to avoid trouble by establishing Civil Marriage for all and leaving the various Churches to frame their own rules for the performance of the religious ceremony. The tension would not entirely disappear; for an Established Church could hardly be indifferent to the nature and character of the Civil Law, but the State would escape much friction. Probably in that case it would be the more liberal clergy who would suffer. The discretion which the law guarantees to them in dealing with the marriage of divorced persons would be speedily taken from them by Canon Law. In a sense, however, the whole subject may be regarded as *sub judice* with the appointment of the new Royal Commission on Marriage and Divorce, an admirable outcome of the introduction into the House of Commons of Mrs. Eirene White's Matrimonial Causes Bill.

When we come to the book itself it is important to note that the Archbishop is not in favour of Disestablishment. Most people, he says, do not want it. It would be regarded 'as the national repudiation of Christianity and its effects would be felt far beyond the borders of the Church.' Disendowment, which he naturally

assumes would accompany it, would cripple and hinder the Church in its spiritual work for the nation. Only in the last resort, if the State refused all reforms and actively interfered with the Church, would the Church be right in asking for Disestablishment.

At the same time he is in love with the vision of a living spiritual society free from all external restraint, and the consequence is that he often appears to speak with two voices. At one time he is the zealous churchman; at another the wise and experienced statesman.

He cites with approval 'the unbending opposition' of the majority of the clergy to the recognition of the Judicial Committee as the final Court of Appeal on questions of ceremonial and doctrine, yet no one could pay the same Court of Appeal a handsomer tribute than he proceeds to do.

> 'The Judicial Committee,' he says, 'is famed throughout the world for its wisdom and impartiality. It consists of judges both learned and experienced. It represents the Crown to which every subject has the right of appeal.'

It can be urged, he adds, that

> 'the Court does not make or lay down the doctrine of the Church. It declares it in deciding between opposing interpretations. Judges accustomed to consider cases impartially, without being moved by fear and prejudice, are more likely to give the right interpretation of Church documents, their rubrics, canons and articles than clergy and laity without judicial experience and influenced by the party controversies of their time.'

He admits frankly that for more than sixty years incessant proposals and schemes for altering the final Court of Appeal have been put forward by Church Commissions, but that all are so open to criticism as to be impracticable. However, he still seems to think it his duty to urge the Church to go on trying. 'The Church should make up its mind,' he says, as to the composition of the Court it regards as most suitable and then enter into discussion with the State authorities. A rather sad outlook for a Church that has failed for so long to make up its own mind or make fruitful contact with the mind of the State. The Archbishop would seem to have little faith in the Church ever making up its mind, for he proceeds to recommend an interim procedure of voluntary submission to disciplinary and judicial decision by Diocesan Bishops acting in Synod. With his own strong, dominating personality no doubt he achieved considerable success by this method in the Southwark Diocese. But taking the clergy as a whole and the Episcopal Bench by and large—what a hope! We are where we were before; treading where the saints have trod for the last

sixty years, but apparently not much the worse in this particular case for our arrested progress.

There are traces too of the two voices in the Archbishop's plea for the revision of Canon Law. At first sight it might seem that he was encouraging a head-on collision with the State in case of Parliament's refusal to implement some of the decisions of Convocation. It is not generally understood how deeply Parliament is involved in the far-reaching revision of Canon Law which is now proceeding on its slow and perilous way. Suffice it to be said, as the Archbishop himself points out, that some of the Canons will require a Measure of the Church Assembly, which procedure in itself requires the final approval of Parliament, and that, quite apart from these Canons, another thirty will require an Act of Parliament as they affect previous legislation. It is obvious that a quarrel might arise between Church and State. What then is the Church to do in case of an *impasse*?

The Archbishop urges that Convocation should not be influenced by fear of the attitude of Parliament on the ground 'that such timidity would be unworthy of a spiritual society and would meet with contempt from those it was intended to propitiate,'; but he moderates his position immediately by adding that it will be time later on to consider any criticism and suggestions which may come from the State. Here the zealous churchman and the wise and experienced statesman would seem to be trying to fit into one another, but they break away again with quite contradictory conclusions. The statesman suggesting that the controversial Canons could be postponed without serious injury to the code as a whole; the zealous churchman suggesting a policy somewhat akin to the policy of the Bishops in regard to the 1928 Prayer Book as follows: 'If Parliament rejects all or some' of the Canons or 'if the Royal Assent is refused' the draft Canons would remain as an impressive record and they would have strong moral and spiritual authority over all the loyal members of the Church. This policy, which would have seemed to Bishop Hensley Henson so morally weak — his idea of zeal was unhampered by diplomacy — represents the kind of compromise into which the Church is quite likely to drift with probably unhappy consequences in the future.

The shadow of Parliamentary control, or (to put it more accurately) the necessity of Parliamentary Assent to Prayer Book revision rests heavily on the conscience of the Archbishop, and reflections on the rejection by Parliament of the 1928 book occupy an important chapter in the book. Indeed they constitute a fascinating study. His proposals for reform are elaborate, but I fear in the end must remain unconvincing to Church and State alike.

His avowed object is to prevent such a debate on doctrinal matters ever taking place in Parliament as occurred in 1928. Some of us do not regret that debate and still believe that the Spirit of God can work even through that mixed assembly. It must often be more difficult for Him to work through the Lower House of the Convocation of Canterbury! But the majority of Church people would be glad to see doctrinal questions removed from the floor of the House of Commons, and it must be admitted that the composition of the House is increasingly discouraging to such discussions. On the other hand, the House of Commons still has a remarkable gift of rising to the occasion, as witness the high level of the debate on Mrs. White's Matrimonial Causes Bill. There is little doubt that there would be real sympathy with any measure of revision on which the Church were reasonably agreed and which did not offend the innate Protestantism of the country. If we want to become more Roman we shall have to do it apart from the State. That I think goes without saying and seems a perfectly fair interpretation of our bargain.

On the whole, therefore, it would seem to be best to leave our relationship with Parliament unchanged till the situation alters — if it should — for the worse. The Archbishop's proposals,[1] described by himself as 'long and cumbrous,' for by-passing a debate in Parliament on doctrinal Measures passed by the Church Assembly would still leave the Authority of the Crown unchanged. The Royal Assent would only be given on the advice of his Ministers, who are responsible to Parliament, and presumably their advice could be challenged and debated under some form of Parliamentary procedure. We should be very much where we were before.

With regard to the apointment of Bishops by the Crown, the Archbishop, after an admirable survey of the advantages and disadvantages, recognizes quite frankly that any material change could only be affected by Disestablishment, a policy which all through the book he professes himself anxious to avoid. The

[1] 'When a measure has been passed by the Assembly dealing with the worship and doctrine of the Church, and the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Lord Chancellor, and the Speaker certify that it relates substantially to the spiritual concerns of the Church of England, and when the Archbishops of Canterbury and York have certified that it has been approved by the Convocations, and twice approved by not less than three quarters of the Dioceses within the two Provinces, that is before and after the revision of the Measure by the Assembly, and when the Archbishops have further certified that the Measure is neither contrary to nor indicative of any departure from the fundamental doctrines of the Church of England, then, without being debated in Parliament, it shall be presented direct to His Majesty for the Royal Assent.'

reforms which he suggests might be useful for the easing of conscience, but they do not amount to very much. Neither the removal of pains and penalties, which are never likely to be inflicted, nor the acquisition of power to compel the Crown to proceed by the method of Letters Patent rather than by *congé délire* would represent any great achievement. They would leave the Crown, which it is acknowledged exercises its powers after careful consideration and consultation, in the same position as before. It is doubtful whether the friction which would be involved in seeking these reforms justifies the effort. They need not be opposed. Only to one of the Archbishop's suggestions must firm opposition be offered. We do not endorse his plea that Archbishops should be given the right to hear objections on the ground of heresy before 'confirming' a Bishop in his see. Such a method of dealing with accusations of heresy would be slipshod, liable to abuse and lacking in all the elements of a judicial setting. Whatever may be said about his other suggestions, this one would certainly put the cat among the pigeons, the fat in the fire and, if I may pile up more metaphors, bring our house about our ears.

I think we may assume that with regard to the appointment of Bishops any clash with the State is likely to be postponed for an indefinite period. This is not because there is not a demand for readjustments, but because only one thing can be done at a time. The ecclesiastical authorities have decided to make the reform of Canon Law their first objective. This business has already largely occupied the time of Convocation over several years and may well do so for another ten.

From the point of view of this paper, I am only concerned with the effect which Canon Law may have upon our relations with the State. Personally I am devoutly thankful that I have not had to fulfil my ministry under such a system of Canon Law as awaits my younger brethren. But perhaps that is due to temperament. The Church of Ireland in which I was ordained remains as a model of a well-governed Church, but unattractive through its lack of elasticity and its strict adherence to rule. It is as unrepresentative of the Celtic spirit of adventure as any well-governed Church could well be. The liberty of the Church of Engalnd, in spite of all the liberties that have been taken with that liberty, has banished dullness and made one conscious of being alive.

Now for our good (I suppose it is for our good) we are about to be put into a straight-jacket and taught to behave ourselves. Many of the Canons will be harmless, some useful; but I dread, for example, the fencing round of the Holy Communion with restrictions which may impede for generations the growth of sacramental

unity with the Free Churches. When we think of the appalling length of time and the almost unbearable fatigue involved in making a canon, we must think too of the labours which will have to be spent in unmaking it when the times of spiritual refreshment and enlightenment at last arrive. Take the ministry of women. What a business it will be to arrange one day for the words 'man or woman' — 'he or she' to appear in the canons dealing with the ordination of deacons and priests and the consecration of Bishops. This by the way. But it certainly does not seem to be a very happy time for stabilizing the law of the Church of England, and I fear that movements which are plainly of the spirit of Christ may be arrested in our Church and compelled to flow through other channels, impairing our usefulness and lessening still further the influence which we can bring to bear upon the life of the nation. No doubt a great deal will depend upon the tone and temper which is developed in the final stages of revision. Perhaps we shall recall when most we need them the wise words to be found in the report of the Archbishops' Commission on Canon Law:

> 'It has been a tradition of the Church of England since the Reformation that the law bearing on its life should be kept to a minimum. Code Law keeps on multiplying so as to cover every conceivable emergency. In our opinion (the Report continues) the majority of Church people would prefer their law in a form which allows many things to be settled by commonsense and the judges to expound and interpret the law when necessary.'

Herein lies our hope for the future, to which may be added the Archbishop's own hint that there are controversial canons which could be postponed without serious injury. If the voice of statesmanship rather than of zeal (and there is a zeal which Scripture tells us is not according to knowledge) should prevail, our relations with the State may still remain fruitful and cordial.

The conclusion that I arrive at in reviewing the Archbishop's book is that the Church is not sufficiently hampered by its present mode of relationship to the State to justify it in devoting its time in these momentous days to seeking a readjustment. The foreseeable and unforeseeable consequences of such action are a reasonable deterrent at the present time. I think the case might be put much more strongly, for we should be sacrificing, or at least jeopardizing, many safeguards against ecclesiastical rigorism and exposing ourselves to constitutional changes at a time when party feeling still runs high. I doubt if the Church of England in its divided state can safely enjoy and profit by a larger measure of constitutional freedom than it now possesses. If the time should ever come when the State should decide to persecute or suppress the Christian religion, it would not make the slightest difference

whether our Church were established or disestablished. The Free Churches with ourselves would suffer equally. It is not necessary, however, to contemplate what should be our reaction and policy in such circumstances. Communism, even in the diluted form in which the English temperament might be tempted to absorb it, is not on the horizon, and ought not to be used as a bogey to frighten us or cloud our judgment with regard to our present relations with the State.

It is time that we turned from what I will not say are irrelevant questions, but questions of minor importance, to ask of what service the Church can be to the nation over and above the delicate (some would say attenuated) spiritual help in its ceremonial life to which I have already alluded.

Here we are in great difficulties, for so large a part of the population does not regard the organization of 'the Church' as a factor relevant to the economic or international situation. The Church has still its uses and Christian baptism, Christian marriage, Christian funeral rites are held in respect, but it is the scientist, the economist and the professional politician who direct the affairs of the nation. These affairs are not consistently directed against a background of ultimate standards, Christian ethic or responsibility to God, but rather as self-interest dictates and expediency allows. There is no direct denial of Christian values. Rather they are regarded as irrelevant or impractical. If history has any meaning, it is too obscure to count upon it. So little of man's destiny is under his control; so many are the factors that are uncontrollable and unpredictable that men are largely occupied with warding off disaster from without, and making the most of such opportunities for social betterment as they possess within the community to which they belong. Nothing much more than this, it is thought, can be attempted. To these ends the scientist, the economist, the politician can contribute, but the Church would seem to be redundant.

We know quite well in our hearts that the Church is not redundant, and it is something of a tragedy that the nation is indifferent to the best that we can offer. We should like to begin on a much higher level than the Welfare State. The doctrine of the Incarnation is not irrelevant to the present situation. The Christian doctrine of man presents the antithesis to the servile State to which danger the Welfare State is constantly exposed. The reality of goodness as embodied in the life of Christ is an antidote to the general belief in evil. The light that is to be found in the Christian revelation still shines like a lighthouse on a stormy sea. Its apocalyptic element is particularly intelligible in the revolutionary times in which we live. Its emphasis on Resurrection, on Judgment, on

the restitution of all things, on the relation of the seen to the unseen, of time to eternity, of man to his Maker (to use an old-fashioned phrase which is still significant) presents a challenge which the Church continues to present and a living hope which it is its business to preserve.

But even if we must begin with more mundane things, I believe there is very real help which the Church can render to the proper working of the Welfare State. I am confirmed in my belief by reading Charles Williams' book, *The Triple Challenge*. Williams was adviser, or Public Relations Officer, for some years to the Prime Minister and wrote his book after his retirement in 1948. There he asks the very pertinent question :

> 'Is the Welfare State a social revolution, or is it the apathetic search of a tired people for social security at almost any cost and at almost any level? Have the British people lost their enterprise, their zeal for life, even their willingness to work? Do they seek merely a dim equalitarian Utopia fit only for the mediocre in which initiative will die for lack of effort?'

In the discussion that follows Mr. Williams makes out a good case for thinking that, in spite of certain disquieting features, the British people are capable of making a success of their new experiment and he is able to quote Mr. Herbert Matthews (then Chief London Correspondent of the *New York Times*), who pronounced this verdict on Britain after an extensive tour through its centres of population :

> 'Anyone who writes off a nation like this, with its patience in adversity, its dogged courage, its civic virtues, its business acumen, skill and experience, is running counter to common sense. To believe in Britain's ultimate recovery is not an act of faith. It is a logical deduction from ascertainable facts.'

To this generous tribute Mr. Williams adds what may be regarded as a warning comment. 'There is no form of Government or Society that demands more of the individual than Socialism.' It is here, I think, in this significant addendum that the Church finds its foothold and in response to which it can assert its usefulness and importance. *Its primary message is to the individual.* It often loses its way when it attempts to formulate either a foreign policy for the nation or a political system for home consumption. Starting from what it sincerely believes to be Christian principles, it often succeeds in producing unChristian results. It is not cognizant of all the relative factors.

But where the individual is concerned it is on much surer ground. To each succeeding organization of society the Church can contribute the inestimable gift of character. It has produced and can continue to produce the type of men and women who can

get the best out of the social system under which they live. If it is true that the Welfare State makes greater demands than any previous one on the individual to make it work successfully, the Church is precisely the organization best fitted to supply the people who can meet these demands. Honesty, integrity, self-discipline, responsibility and the promotion of the community spirit are its watchwords.

> 'Blessed is the man that hath not walked in the counsel of the ungodly, nor stood in the way of sinners, and hath not sat in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of the Lord, and in His law will he exercise himself day and night.'
>
> 'What doth the Lord require of thee but to do justly, to love mercy and to walk humbly with thy God'!
>
> 'Seek ye first the Kingdom of God and his righteousness and all these things shall be added unto you.'

Mr. Williams seems to think that the demands which Socialism makes for its successful working can be met by Socialism itself. 'Democratic Socialism needs democrats to work it,' he asserts a trifle pontifically. And as regards the undoubted threat to personal liberties which Socialism, if ill-administered, can bring with it, he finds his safeguard in 'the constant watchfulness of a democratic Parliament, a democratic Press and a democratic public opinion.'

All good so far as it goes — if you can be sure that those whom you work with attach the same high meaning to democracy as yourself. The Russian use of the word is very different. But the stubborn fact of human nature and its capacity to wreck the best conceived plans remains unsolved by oligarchy or democracy or despotism. It is precisely here that the Church can help the nation. It stands for the necessity of the new birth, the guidance of the Spirit of God and the relevance of ultimates to human life. Its contribution is essential and we must persist in contributing it by producing the men and women of all-round Christian character and vision that the nation needs as a stabilizing influence and a dynamic force.

Beginning with this mundane approach to the needs of the Welfare State, we may gradually recover the confidence of the nation with regard to our teaching on faith and morals. There is nothing like the witness of Christian living to create an interest in Christian philosophy. The quality of a truly Christian life provokes the desire to discover its secret.

There is one great asset in our favour. Men cannot continue to live in a spiritual vacuum. If Communism is to be rejected as a creed the void must be filled by something else. We are greatly indebted at the present day, not so much to the theologians who are labouring on schemes of systematic theology, but to the

prophets amongst us who are engaged in presenting through their books and across the wireless a really dynamic Christianity to the people of this country. They are making a bid to fill the gap. Official pronouncements hardly deal with such a state of mind as is revealed, for example, in Köstler's *Age of Longing*, but the Church is not without its answer through its prophets who understand the psychology of the age we live in, its appalling sense of frustration and its need of help.

We must not allow ourselves to be depressed by the picture of the Church so often presented to us — a Church shy in its approach to the subjects that trouble the modern man, overburdened with economic cares, afflicted by bureaucracy and occupied with trivial matters. All institutions — even the oldest and the greatest of them, the Church itself — suffer in time from these complaints, but some of them, notably the Church, show great resiliency and powers of recovery. The doctrine of 'the remnant,' the survival of a forward-looking group within the body politic, applies not only to the Israel of old, but to the Church of to-day. We need not despair. Even if much of the theology of to-day seems to have turned inward and backward, there are not wanting signs that we may soon be on the march again and more able than we are at present to help the nation to recover its faith.

Meantime we must do our utmost to prevent the Church of England turning into a sect — living out its life in comparative isolation from the larger life of the nation. Ecclesiastical tidiness can be bought at too great a price. In spite of all its apparent illogicalities, the Establishment preserves for the Church great opportunities and compels it to pursue larger aims, face larger problems, and identify itself with a larger life.

DIVERSITY IN UNITY[1]

By the Rev. E. F. Carpenter, B.D., Canon of Westminster

'Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.' I *Cor.* xii, 4.
'Let both grow together until the harvest.' *Mt.* xiii, 30.

WHEN Jesus challenged twelve of his own countrymen to follow him, and they responded, the Christian community was born. John the Baptist had been a lone voice crying in the wilderness and his fearful call to repentance was addressed to the individual heart. Though some of his followers appear to have

[1] Sermon preached to the Modern Churchmen's Conference in Somerville College, Oxford, August 13, 1951.

lingered into the second half of the first century (as the Gospel of John shows), yet most of them came to him and went their way. But Jesus consciously and deliberately founded a community : his disciples were not to be separate men living separated lives, but they were to be organically related to himself, and through him to each other. Theirs was to be a common life lived in the power of his spirit.

Thus the Christian Church was launched in history and began that chequered pilgrimage which is not yet complete. As we take account of its impact upon the world, we are sometimes uplifted to hope, at other times plunged into despair. We see it one moment as a beacon blazing a new spiritual trail, at another as an engine of oppression and an agent of tyranny. The Church, we are painfully reminded, is a community, not of the elect, but of those in the process of being saved, and the world has often been as much within it as without it.

The New Testament itself gives us a similar picture of light and shade, of sacrificial love and contentious strife. If history can teach us anything, it can at least remind us that it is as idle a pastime to romanticize the past as to imagine that our own age is unique in its wisdom. In the letters of St. Paul we can already discover those tensions which are inseparably bound up with the corporate or institutional religious life. The first disciples themselves were a very mixed group and their relations with each other were often disappointing. Perhaps nothing is more pathetic in the Gospels than the picture of the young Gallilean peasant going up to Jerusalem to die for his vision of the Kingdom, and that little group following behind him disputing in miserable fashion which of them should be the greatest in their new estate.

It is easy to become somewhat cynical and see such introversion in the Christian community as the whole of the story, rather than as the spot which can all too often defile the robe. Perhaps no leader was brought up against the problems inherent in a religious society in a more practical way than that intrepid and dynamic person — Paul of Tarsus. His relations with the church in the cosmopolitan city of Corinth, that great gateway to the East and the capital of the Roman province of Achaia, may well be taken as typical. No population was more mixed in every possible way; and we can well imagine less enthusiastic friends advising Paul that it would be unwise, perhaps impossible, to include within one community such diverse racial and social groups. Better to have one church for the Jews, another for the Romans, a third for the more intellectual among the Greeks, and perhaps a fourth for the slaves and those who could not be fitted

in elsewhere. But on this point Paul was always adamant. He had already withstood Peter to the face to prevent the Christian Church becoming a sect of Jewry, and he was determined that as there was one Lord and one faith, so there was going to be one community in Corinth. But no amount of idealism could alter the fact that such comprehension did lead to great difficulty: and when St. Paul left the city there was a tendency for the community to break up and fall apart. Such abundant vitality and diversity could not easily be contained within the one fellowship. There was much jealousy, strife and contention; so much so that St. Paul is called upon to deal with it. This meant, for his own satisfaction, that he must construct a *rationale* for attempting something which was always difficult and very often disturbing. He had to convince himself that it was worth doing. The easiest way out of the problem, of course, was to iron out the differences, to clamp down upon this diversity, to cultivate a particular type, and make all after the one pattern. Or, on the other hand, to do nothing and watch the community degenerate into anarchy. But Paul would have none of these things; he had too much respect both for the integrity of the individual and the welfare of the whole. Fortunately his own robust individuality enabled him to see all these differences in profile as God given and God derived, the result of a divine creative activity which never reduplicates in the whole realm of creation. And as such he was prepared to welcome them. Rightly directed, the very tensions which such prodigality inevitably produced could become the stimulus to a more abundant life. They need not be merely the occasion for strife and jealousy. There was work to be done, which needed the co-operation of all, and a truth to be discovered greater than the sum total of all their knowledge. St. Paul was much too conscious of the limitations of his own attainment, too much aware how often he saw through a glass darkly, to imagine that the church did not need the vision of all its members. Did he not sometimes fear lest he while preaching to others should himself be a castaway? The really Christian community, he is convinced, is comprehensive, and within it there is room for all. Even the stresses and strains can work together for good if they are seen as the expression of the one spirit of God. 'One man's gift by the spirit,' he writes, 'is to speak with wisdom, another's to speak with knowledge. The same spirit gives to another man faith, to another the ability to heal, to another the power to do great deeds. The same spirit gives to another man the gift of preaching the word of God, to another the ability to discriminate in spiritual matters, to another speech in different tongues and to yet another the power to interpret the tongues. Behind

all these gifts is the operation of the same Spirit Who distributes to each individual man as He wills.' As Von Hugel has well expressed it: 'What makes a man a Christian is neither his intellectual acceptance of certain ideas or his conformity to a certain rule, but his possession of a certain spirit and his participation in a certain life.'

It may seem a very far cry both in time and space from the little struggling community in Corinth to the *Ecclesia Anglicana* which is now a world communion. Yet they are hewn from the same spiritual rock and the same effort to comprehend, to open wide the door, may be seen as characteristic of both. The Church of England not only claims a historic tradition going back to these early days, but when that tradition was revitalized at the time of the Reformation, it was around the individual and his basic needs that the new spiritual wind blew. As we read the story of our Church's history from the sixteenth century, it may appear to the superficial reader as almost a historical accident that its inclusive nature has become one of its distinguishing characteristics. True it is that the practical object of Elizabeth and her advisers was to contain within the new pattern all those Christians who, in loyalty to the throne, were prepared to live peaceably together. In the light of this political realism, a precise doctrinal uniformity was seen to be an impossible condition of unity, and it is to this fact that the ambiguity of the Thirty-nine Articles bears witness. Thus there was housed in the Reformed Church of England (sometimes uncomfortably) those who looked back nostalgically to a past generation, as well as those who were influenced in varying degrees by the multitudinous patterns and theologies of the continental reformers. Many logical minds even at the time were horrified at such an untidy set up, and, like its counterpart at Corinth, we must admit that this diversity has often led to strife and bred contention.

But this is by no means the whole of the story. Forced to live together side by side, these sections within the Church of England have gradually come to see that no one party could become normative. They have therefore learnt to respect each other, to make a virtue of necessity, and have been encouraged to find the true bond of a living Christian community, in a common sharing of the spirit of Christ, rather than in the acceptance of a rigid set of religious propositions. The principle of comprehension has come to be the vital life blood of our national Church.

And we may go further, for this very fact of comprehension is itself a reminder, as to Paul, that the truth is greater than all our apprehensions of it, and that all human judgments, working even

upon truths of revelation, are but our weak efforts to understand what eye hath not seen. We have our spiritual treasures in very earthen vessels. It is out of the resolution of our differences that we approximate more nearly to the truth as it is in Jesus. Such inclusiveness, moreover, by the very fact of bringing diverse traditions and different emphases together, is a true begetter of humility, and no virtue is more needed along the *via theologica*. No one section represents the whole, but each may correct the other with something of its own spirit, and discover deeper unities. Maybe, this is partly the reason why the *Ecclesia Anglicana* has been fruitful in missionary enterprise, and may yet serve as a bridge church between the separated communions of Christendom. It has something of their individual witness within itself.

To tidy and administrative minds the Church of England may well appear an impossible contradiction, and something which ought not to exist. Neither its doctrinal position nor its pattern of worship are easy to state or to define, nor, I think, would any of us know exactly where to go for them. It was part of the Elizabethan intention that this should be so, and that Christian men should be brought together into fellowship through the great religious principles which unite, rather than separated by precise definitions which breed war. We need not be worried, I feel, that many men have lived happily and usefully within the Church of England who would have found life much more difficult, and invited persecution, elsewhere. With all their shortcomings, perhaps because of them, the lay courts in our country, to which all ecclesiastical appeals finally go, have undoubtedly served to protect sincere men from the theological persecution of their equally sincere brothers; and by so doing have safeguarded liberty of thought and fostered a healthy independence. The Church of England has managed to avoid a concentration of power in ecclesiastical hands. It is sometimes a good thing that lay people have little understanding of, and not much patience with, nice theological distinctions. It is not to our discredit that we have respected the individual so far as to have retained many a Loisy (and a Keble) within the same Church. Such men have done good to the community; and doubtless the community has been of service to them.

And so we, who call ourselves Modern Churchmen, may well feel that we have a very real and historic place within the Church of England, not simply as a particular and defined party, though such witness may at times be important, but as an influence and spiritual climate permeating the whole. Nor need we think of ourselves as only of modern growth. St. Paul, speaking the language of the Greek poets in Athens, or translating the agricul-

tural idiom of the Palestinian Gospel into the thought-forms of the urban civilization of the Graeco-Romano world; the author of the Fourth Gospel working out the implications of the *Logos*; the great Origen softening the barbarities of the Old Testament, which contemporaries found rather shocking, by means of an allegorical interpretation; Thomas Aquinas welcoming the rediscovery of the thought of Aristotle; the Cambridge Platonists, disgusted with the strife that religion had brought to Europe in their day, trying to lift it out of the maze of presumptuous doctrines into the more serene atmosphere of universal principles; Maurice, Kingsley and Gore endeavouring to relate the Christian Gospel to the new social forces which were beginning to dominate the world — surely such men were modernists in their day and generation.

The Modern Churchmen's Union of our own day, as we know, grew out of the difficulties, into which many religious people were thrown, by the so-called conflict of science and religion; and it endeavoured to deal with the dilemma, not by running away in fright from new truth, but by seeing what modifications were needed in the presentation of the old, and how both new and old could be included in a wider synthesis. Behind the attempt was the basic conviction that no truth can finally lead us away from God, and that revelation itself is not static.

And so our modernism to-day has still a treble emphasis. First, it seeks to relate the faith of Christ to contemporary and living problems, and to make religion intelligible. Each generation has its own particular difficulties both in the realms of knowledge and of conduct. Perhaps no previous generation of Christian people has ever been more urgently faced, and in such an acute form, with the political and sociological problem and the question of total war. What does a Christian do in such a world, and what must his attitude be? He would be a very bold man who would claim that the Churches, or our own movement, had yet courageously faced up to this situation. Yet it constitutes one of the great problems for the religious man and as such cannot be ignored. It forms the background of the age in which we live, and it is to people living in this kind of world that the Christian faith must direct itself. It cannot inhabit a vacuum.

Secondly, our modernism must nerve us to accept what is true no matter how disturbing it may be to old-established opinion. Our allegiance cannot finally be to an expediency which is mainly concerned with filling the empty pew. The quest for truth is never-ending and its perfect realization would demand an apprehension of the inter-relatedness of all knowledge. Nor can the battle for

truth, for us mortals, ever finally be won. Every generation represents a fresh incursion of barbarians waiting to be tamed and instructed. We know within ourselves, and history writes it large in blood and tears, how insidious is the temptation to fall back into the primitive, the superstitious and the undeveloped. We ourselves are living in days when the flight from reason all over the world is one of our major tragedies, and it is perhaps only natural that in response to it there is a tendency for religion to become equally illiberal, obscurantist and intolerant. It is up to us to resist this at all costs. The task of the Modern Churchman is not to rest on his oars, to congratulate himself on past triumphs, or he may find the boat drifting down stream. Every cause has to be repeatedly refought and re-won. Where great civilizations once flourished, Toynbee reminds us in his monumental work, the tropical forests have again devoured all.

And lastly, because of these things, the Modernist stands for a disciplined freedom with the understood right, nay the duty, of the individual to speak the truth as he sees it. It is better to run the risk of internal strife, and a measure of disorder, rather than to purchase uniformity by creating an authority to crush freedom. It is not given to mortal man to move in the world of the infallibles. The Modernist believes that the very differences within our Church have given it a vitality which not all branches of Christendom possess; and he presumes to think that such diversity and spontaneity are more in keeping with the spirit of the New Testament than more authoritarian systems.

When William Whiston came to the end of his earthly pilgrimage in 1752 his sincere, brilliant and yet eccentric genius had led him far from the safer paths of orthodoxy; and he had suffered much. There was some debate as to what his epitaph should be. The choice of a friend was perhaps the right one: '*Quocunque veritas duxit, ausus sequi.*' 'Wherever truth led, there I dared to follow.'

What more noble tribute could any man earn?

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